

The End is Your Beginning

Posted originally on the [Archive of Our Own](http://archiveofourown.org/works/32171776) at <http://archiveofourown.org/works/32171776>.

Rating:	Not Rated
Archive Warning:	Major Character Death
Fandoms:	Minecraft (Video Game) , Video Blogging RPF , DreamSMP , Dream SMP
Relationships:	No Romantic Relationship(s) , benchtrio - Relationship , Wilbur Soot & Technoblade & TommyInnit & Phil Watson , platonic - Relationship , SBI - Relationship , Sleepy Boys Inc. & Toby Smith Tubbo , Floris Fundy & Wilbur Soot
Characters:	TommyInnit (Video Blogging RPF) , Technoblade (Video Blogging RPF) , Mumza , Philza , Phil Watson (Video Blogging RPF) , Toby Smith Tubbo , Ranboo (Video Blogging RPF) , Eret (Video Blogging RPF) , Alexis Quackity , Sam Awesamdude , Clay Dream (Video Blogging RPF) , DreamXD , Ender Dragon (Minecraft) , Clay Dream's Sister Drista (Video Blogging RPF) , Floris Fundy
Additional Tags:	Exiled TommyInnit (Video Blogging RPF) , Exile , ender dragon - Freeform , TommyInnit is Missing (Video Blogging RPF) , Runaway TommyInnit (Video Blogging RPF) , Traumatized TommyInnit (Video Blogging RPF) , TommyInnit Needs a Break (Video Blogging RPF) , Wilbur Soot and Technoblade and TommyInnit are Siblings , Scared TommyInnit (Video Blogging RPF) , Fluff , Angst , Fluff and Angst , Healing , Tommyinnit needs therapy , Therapy , Pig Hybrid Technoblade (Video Blogging RPF) , TommyInnit-centric (Video Blogging RPF) , the end minecraft , Villain Clay Dream (Video Blogging RPF) , Goddess of Death Kristin Rosales Watson , Angel of Death Phil Watson (Video Blogging RPF) , Character Death , Wingfic , Wings , Flying , Prince TommyInnit (Video Blogging RPF) , TommyInnit Angst (Video Blogging RPF) , Exile Arc on Dream Team SMP (Video Blogging RPF) , Exile Arc on Dream Team SMP Angst (Video Blogging RPF) , Exile Arc on Dream Team SMP Canon Divergence (Video Blogging RPF) , Alternate Universe - Canon Divergence , Yeah i used the end poem and i cried doing it , Bittersweet , Bittersweet Ending , Plot Twists , Reunions
Language:	English
Collections:	Dream SMP Fics (Mainly Tommy (Yeah I'm That Bitch)) , Tommyinnit vacates the premises , DSMP FICS (But Who Am I Kidding It's Mostly SBI Family Dynamics Fics(And Tommy Centered)) , Mcyt(mostly SBI) fics that I adore , Honeys fav SBI/DSMP , I'm a sucker for Found family and SBI is full of it! , mcytbrainrot , Dream smp fics to feed my insomnia , finished fics that I will need to read again for any fandom , Everyone deserves a healing arch , Mcyt , Higuu's Faves , OMG (👉°)  , Pogchamp DSMP Fanfic!! , TommyInnit fics that hurt my feelings , wOah , Finished Favs , I liked these fics and I finished them , hugs , Ash's Favorite Completed MCYT Fics , hixpatch's all time favorites , Sixer's

[Dream SMP Favorites](#), [Sad Tommy Fics For a Day I Need to Cry](#), [Fics that make me cry](#), [i will and can trade my soul for these fics. actually id rather keep my soul](#), [♥author you are a god \(dsmp\)♥](#), [And I Have Cried to These Songs](#), [Literally sobbing](#), [Good soup](#)

Stats:

Published: 2021-06-25 Completed: 2022-04-13 Words: 65,320 Chapters: 17/17

The End is Your Beginning

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Summary

When Tommy finally left exile, he didn't escape to the tundra. He escaped to a world he'd never known before, of beauty and magic. A family grew there with him, helping to heal his bruises and broken heart until he could stand proudly as himself again.

Or—tommy, while running away from exile, accidentally falls into the end, and builds a home there

Fanart, kudos, and comments appreciated!

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Notes

Well ya'll, i started another fic. I hope you enjoy! This is chapter 1, there will be more!

See the end of the work for more [notes](#)

Eye Spy

Chapter Summary

Warnings!

Near Drowning, abuse mention, burn mention, injury, minor suicidal thoughts

The tundra nipped harshly at Tommy's skin, causing his teeth to chatter as he trekked through the plains of snow. The sun had long since set, and the cold was only getting worse. Clouds were beginning to gather, and the falling snowflakes were becoming more and more abundant as minutes passed. He would've preferred to be wearing clothes better suited for the icy wasteland, but he didn't have any, so he knew he was just going to have to deal with it. He didn't have anything really. Dream had confiscated his communicator a month ago, at the start of his exile. All his supplies and weapons had been blown sky high earlier. He wished he had his compass, though Dream had taken that too before he left.

His ears were still ringing and his head still pounding from the blunt of the explosion that tore logstedshire apart, leaving only a burning heap of what was no longer his home. He had his arms wrapped tightly around himself, trying to keep in any warmth he could salvage that was left over from living on the sweltering shoreline. The sun burns across his arms and face helped a little bit. His blonde--now almost brown hair was tinged with frost, and his cloudy grey eyes, having long ago lost their bright blue, were focused on his feet as he trudged forward. He only had one shoe on, still not quite sure when he'd lost the other.

Tommy didn't know specifically where he was going, just that he was going away. He'd had enough of Dream, and exile. His ex friends had had enough of him too, so he was doing what they wanted, and leaving, because apparently exile hadn't been far enough away to keep him out of trouble, judging by the bruises and burn scars along his skin. When he woke up, he'd just turned away from the burning shores and started walking until he was here, lost in a frozen tundra.

He didn't want to call it running away, that sounded cowardly. He thought of it more as "moving on."

Snow clung to his pants as he limped toward nowhere. He had to continue reminding himself to keep going. Twice already the boy had stopped, his mind telling him that he needed to go back to Dream, because Dream cared about him and would be worried if he was gone. Then his thoughts reminded him that Dream didn't care, and neither did anyone else. Another voice in his head told him that that was a lie, and while Dream didn't care, his friends did.

Tommy had blocked out all his thoughts after the second time, determined to stay going. It was making his head hurt even more than it had when he'd gained consciousness after the explosion.

Dream had found out about his stash of weapons beneath logstedshire. He'd yelled and screamed and hit no matter how much Tommy apologized. Finally he'd lit a stick of dynamite and tossed it into the basement. Then another, then another. Finally, he'd thrown Tommy down the steps too, and the teen had barely any time to get out before the explosion tore across the plane, knocking him unconscious.

He was sorry. He really was. He couldn't quite remember why he'd gathered all that stuff in the first place. It was stupid of him.

Tears pricked Tommy's eyes as he remembered how angry his friend had been at him. He cursed himself in his mind for being so stupid, for going against what his friend had said. Dream only wanted what was best for him, right?

No. He needed to keep going.

Tommy was tired, and in pain.

The smell of blood followed him, and he knew that he was bleeding somewhere on his head, probably from when the blast threw him against the wall.

The wind howled deeply, tugging the teen sideways. He tripped, falling face first into the snow with a pitiful yelp. The chill stung his skin, sharp enough to almost feel warm.

It felt like a hug, like reading by the fire, like wings wrapped around him. Like a distant explosion, like the nether.

For a moment he considered just staying there, because eventually, he would freeze to death, and he wouldn't have to feel anything else.

But he couldn't, because some stubborn voice in his head told him to stand up and dust the snow off himself. He listened, and soon the boy was once again stumbling aimlessly through the snow.

For a few moments he tried to convince himself that the warm light in the distance wasn't real, because no sane person would live in the middle of the arctic, other than maybe Phil and Technoblade, who were long gone. But no, it was real. The glowing light was really there.

A wooden cabin sat just on the horizon, silhouetted by tall evergreens. The windows of the lodge flickered with a soft, welcoming light. White smoke billowed from the chimney in wispy clouds. A horse was kept in a stable just outside, surrounded by hay and warm torches. The horse didn't seem to mind being outside in the snow. It looked comfortable within its shed.

Tommy staggered toward the cabin as his stomach began to growl. If he was going to run away, he would need supplies.

He almost tripped on his way up the wooden stairs. He landed on the porch with a thud, scraping his palms against the wood. Tommy cursed as a splinter got caught in his hand. He

didn't have time to deal with it right now. Though, he had to keep going.

With a shaky breath, Tommy knocked on the door. The knock echoed in the silence of the night. No reply came.

"He-llo?" The teen stammered, his throat hoarse from smoke as he tried to call out. "Anyone home?"

Still there was no answer.

For a moment he stood under the porch awning, tapping his foot. He was beginning to feel sick—sicker than he already was. The hunger growing in his gut ate away at him with a shiver.

With a sudden decision, he turned the handle, and before he had the chance to rethink his choice, the door creaked open.

Tommy practically sank into the warmth that greeted him. Inside the cottage the front room was dim, lit only by a warm fire flickering in the hearth. The hardwood was covered with a deep red rug. A few plush chairs and a couch were set in a circle around a dark oak coffee table. The walls were lined with a few chests. Hanging beside the door was a finely made leather satchel.

Tommy cleared his throat and called out again.

"Uh- sorry for intruding. I just- I need some h-...is anyone here?"

As far as Tommy could tell, the cabin was empty.

The teen sighed, and with one last wary glance around the cottage, he slunk over to the chests and pushed one open.

His face lit up at the sight of what was in front of him. The trunk was chalked full of golden apples, bread, steaks, and golden carrots. His fingers itched as he began pulling stacks of food from the chests, holding the heap of items in his arms. He quickly ate a gapple and then practically sank into the relief it provided. Tommy glanced over at the door and quickly ran over, pulling the satchel from its place against the doorframe. There were already a few things inside of it, which he left in the pack. As quickly as possible he began shoving his newfound goods into the bag. When he felt he had enough, he moved to the next chest. He was greeted by a case absolutely filled to the brim with different kinds of potions. He quickly shoved those into the bag too, taking a few instant healing and regeneration, along with a strength potion or two.

He downed a healing potion and almost collapsed with relief when he felt a few of his wounds begin to stitch themselves back together. The pounding in his head and the ringing in his ears subsided, and Tommy wanted to lay there and wallow in the calm silence of not being in pain. Dream hadn't allowed him to use healing potions. Using one now felt like betrayal.

But he shook off the feeling, because more than that it felt like heaven, and freedom.

Tommy was growing tired, the relief of not being in pain and the warmth of the fire finally weighing down on him. His eyelids began to drift shut, his vision becoming foggy. He laid down on the carpet with a quiet yawn.

For a moment he shut his eyes.

The front door flew open, followed by loud footsteps and frustrated grumbles. Tommy sat up quickly, pushing himself against the wall of chests as tremors began to claw up his spine.

In the doorway stood a hulking figure, almost seven feet tall. He had the face of a boar, with bright red eyes and sharp tusks coming from his bottom jaw. A wild pink mane hung at his back with a single braid woven into the fur. He wore a red cape with fluffy white lining, adorned with gold chains and rubies and sapphires. A single green emerald hung from one of his pig-like ears. A gleaming netherite axe was strapped to his belt. A pair of reading glasses sat on his pig snout.

Technoblade sighed, running a hoofed hand through his bangs. He was mumbling to himself. The boar hadn't yet noticed the child shaking in his front room. He removed his cape, leaving only his casual clothing, and began to hang it on the hook by the door.

"Would you shut up, chat? I'm home now, you can be—" Techno froze, his gaze finally falling onto the small shape pressed against the wall. Moments of silence followed as the two brothers stared at each other, one too afraid and one too confused to move. When the boar sighed, the teen flinched.

"Tommy," Techno said boredly, crossing his arms, "What are you doing in my house?"

Tommy fumbled over his words, his eyes not moving off of the giant figure in the doorway.

The teen stared at his estranged brother with wild eyes. He was going to die, Technoblade was going to kill him. Tommy's heartbeat was pounding in his ears as he watched the piglin hybrid in front of him, his thoughts racing as he tried to figure out what to do.

Techno glanced at the satchel sitting at Tommy's feet. His satchel, filled with his belongings.

"Why do you have my stuff, Tommy?" Techno asked, staring at his little brother with a calm, yet sharp expression.

Yet again Tommy stammered, his wide eyes focused on the hybrid in front of him. Slowly the boy sank to the floor, his hands grasping for the bag laying on the hardwood. When he finally grabbed one of the leather straps, he watched Techno a second more before making his move.

Before Techno knew quite what was happening, Tommy was charging at him. The teen jumped to the ground, trying to slide out the door through the space beside Techno. In almost half a second, Techno grabbed the teen by the collar of his shirt, earning a distressed yelp from him. Tommy kicked and thrashed as Techno tried to drag him back into the house, the boy swinging his arms wildly .

“LET ME GO!” Tommy screamed at the top of his lungs before slamming his elbow into Techno’s face. His brother shouted and stumbled back, dropping Tommy. As soon as he hit the floor Tommy grabbed the satchel and sprinted down the frost covered steps, out into the snow. While he’d been inside the calm snowfall had quickly turned into what was now a blizzard that stung his eyes.

Techno shouted after him angrily, but made no move to follow him out into the tundra. Though Tommy knew he wasn’t being chased, he kept running, turning on his heel and choosing a direction to go in. His heartbeat pounded in his ears as he ran, not looking back once. Techno could easily catch up to him, along with Phil if he was nearby. That knowledge forced the teen to keep running, not sparing a glance behind him.

As he ran on, he noticed a nether portal in the distance and began racing towards it, clutching the satchel to his chest. He kicked up snow as he ran. He was almost to it when-

His breath caught in his throat as the snow gave out beneath him, and suddenly he was falling. He fell through the open air before landing in water. He yelped as icy pins and needles wrapped around him. The water was pulling him under, and he could only grab a single short breath before he sank below the surface. Tommy was able to open his eyes for a moment. He was being dragged down, and down and down, the small amount of light from above quickly fading. He made the mistake of trying to breathe and inhaled too much water.

He was thrown around in the whirlpool, slammed against the watery caves and tunnel walls he was being dragged into.

The last thing he remembered was a bright flash of light before his head collided with the side of the water logged tunnel, and he fell unconscious.

Someone was calling him. A voice he recognized was reaching towards him in the darkness. He’d heard this voice before, once after the final control room, and then again after the duel with Dream. She was saying something to him, but the words were garbled and distorted. He could see a faintly glowing figure in the distance, calling out to him. He was able to pick out a few words of what she was saying.

“....stay....not your time...”

Tommy gasped. He sat up quickly, eyes flying open as he began coughing up water. He heaved the salty water, clutching at his chest. Suddenly he was in a dark cave, with a swirling pool of water lying in front of him. The cavern was dimly lit by a light further down in the cave tunnel. His clothes were soaked as he pulled himself to his feet. His leather satchel was laying beside him. He quickly grabbed it and began rifling through the contents. Everything was still in there. He sighed with relief before laying back down on the cold stone.

With a determined sigh, he pushed himself to his feet and looked around the cave. There were a few tunnels leading off from the stone room he was in, and he shakily began walking down the one that glowed with a dim light. He needed to get out of there, and he certainly couldn’t go back through the whirlpool that had dragged him into this cave.

As he walked on, the gravelly rocks around him turned into brick stone walls. The cracked bricks were covered in moss and dust and tangled vines. Soon the tunnel became a hallway. Tommy looked around, baffled. Never before had the teen seen a place like this. He stepped into a large room. Several hallways led off to the room, some of them closed off by iron doors. The walls were lined with bright torches that flickered in iron holders. The air was stale and full of dust that caught in Tommy's throat, making him cough. The place looked abandoned, like it had been for decades.

"Hello?" Tommy called out when the coughing had stopped. He was met with his own voice echoing back against the stone. Amid the silence he could hear a dull droning, coming from the floor beneath him. The abandoned ruins carried an eerie vibe that sent chills up the boy's spine. With a tired sigh, he continued walking, choosing one of the tunnels and slowly limping down the pathway. He reached up and plucked a torch off the wall, feeling comforted by the heat it provided.

The pathway, to the teens dismay, led to several more corridors. As Tommy walked on, he knew he was only sinking deep into the stone labyrinth. He'd gone too far to turn back though, and eventually he would get out, right?

As he walked on, the droning beneath his feet only grew louder, which meant he was supposedly getting closer to the source. But each time he thought he'd found it, he was forced to choose another hallway that only led him further and further into the stronghold.

He turned down another hallway and stepped into what appeared to be a large library. The ceilings stretched high into the air, the space filled with rows and rows of bookshelves. Ladders stretched up the walls to a second floor filled with even more books.

Tommy walked down one of the aisles, running his hand along the different texts. Each book was covered in a thick layer of dust that told Tommy that they hadn't been used in what was possibly centuries. He took one of the novels from off the shelf and flipped through the pages. The words scrawled on the paper were faded and smudged, written in a language that the boy couldn't identify. A quick look at a second, then third, then eighth book confirmed that practically every volume there was written in the same odd symbols.

As Tommy sighed, setting the book back into its place, the hairs on the back of his neck rose. A new presence stood directly behind him, an uncomfortable aura settling onto his shoulders. The teen warily glanced behind him, and was greeted by a solid black figure towering over him.

Tommy froze, quickly snapping his eyes toward the ground to avoid looking at the enderman standing behind him, watching him closely with its bright purple eyes.

Though time and time again Ranboo had told him that endermen were not to be feared as long as you didn't make eye contact with the creatures, he still shivered under its gaze. He began slowly inching away, toward another doorway on the opposite side of the library aisle.

The enderman watched calmly as the boy turned and darted out of the room. The creature hummed curiously before disappearing in a bright flash of purple particles.

It felt like hours that he was stuck in that stronghold, every twist and turn only confusing him further. He knew he was lost. He tried to mark places he'd seen before by scorching the wall with his torch, like specific rooms and doorways, but even when he thought he'd walked in a straight line, he came across the space again. After the seventeenth time it happened, he stopped leaving markers. He realized that every path he took was decided by how loud the thrumming noise he heard was, and he was unknowingly trying to find it.

Tommy was beginning to grow tired. He'd never once liked closed spaces like this, and the walls only felt like they were getting smaller as he trudged on. He was losing hope of getting out of there. Gods knew he needed a place to stay, but he knew he would go insane if he did stay there. The bag around his shoulder was only becoming heavier, wearing down on the teen.

He turned another corner and was met by a large staircase. Instantly the droning hum that lingered in the walls grew louder, coming from the bottom of the steps. Down the stairs was a bright, yellow light.

Tommy absentmindedly began making his way down the stairs. The humming filled his ears, clearing his thoughts as he was drawn further down. It was so loud, and yet the teen made no move to get away from it or even cover his ears. At the bottom of the steps lay a large room. The walls were lined with iron bars, and yellow lanterns hung from the low stone ceiling on iron chains. Lava fell into pools on the ground from cracks in the walls. In the center of the room was a platform with a small stone staircase leading up to it.

Tommy stepped up to it, moving without thinking. A circular structure sat before him, with green glass frames lined by smooth obsidian. It was made of a white stone, the likes of which he had never seen before. In the glass frames were orbs that resembled ender pearls, but they were brighter, tinged with emerald and deep ocean blue. They looked strikingly like eyes.

In the center of the odd formation spun a deep galaxy. The dark abyss spun in a slow, lazy circle, sparkling with white stars. The void emitted a low hum that rooted itself in Tommy's mind.

He wasn't thinking as he began to drift closer, no longer in control of his movement. His curious, intrigued mind led him further into the room. The teen's mind felt cloudy. He set one foot onto the glass frame, hoisting himself onto the structure. He stared at the abyss that looked back up, reaching towards him. He slowly inched closer, stepping toward the voice that beckoned him to it. It had a soothing voice that sounded awfully like the woman from earlier. He held his arms up at his sides, palms facing the floor.

When he finally realized what was happening, he was already falling, his vision filled with stars and endless night.

Tommyinnit Drowned

Chapter Summary

TW- implied drowning. mention of abuse. mention of bruises.

Technoblade stared out in bewilderment at the startled figure racing into the swirling blizzard, his fists clenched at his side. He'd run off the porch and was now standing in the snow, watching his brother run off in the direction of his nether portal. The piglin paced around in the snow for a moment before stomping back into his house. He growled in his throat annoyed, removing the axe from his belt and leaning it against the door frame. The boar scoffed, slamming the door shut before stomping over to his chests and checking what was left of his resources. Tommy hadn't made off with too much, maybe a bit of food and some potions. The boy had also left a bunch of items scattered on the floor, with one bottle completely shattered when he'd bolted toward the door. He took Techno's bag too it seemed, which was annoying. Why had the kid even come here? He wasn't wearing the proper clothing for the North, he looked like hell, covered in bruises and dirt, and he was missing a whole shoe. Technoblade would have found the way Tommy looked absolutely terrified of him amusing if it hadn't seemed so---genuine.

The hybrid huffed as he began shoving the items left out on the floor back into their chests, irritated because he'd just cleaned the house up this morning. He stood up to get a mop for one of the spilled invisibility potions that'd been smashed, rubbing the back of his furred neck.

Technoblade hadn't seen the kid in a long time, so finding his brother cowering in his living room, covered in bruises and hardly standing, was utterly jarring to say the least. Of course the one time he sees him, it's only so he could steal Techno's belongings. Figures.

He filled a bucket with water, staring out the window above the sink at the falling blizzard. Chat was quarrelling, some begging Technoblade to go and save Tommy, while others told him to stay put.

Save Tommy Save Tommy

Haha nerds gonna die in the snow

Little raccoon thinks he can steal from us

BLOOD FOR THE-

Shut up

Sorry

MUMZA POG?

Tommy is gonna die!

Drowninnit!

Save Brother!

The hybrid turned the sink off and spun on his heel, shaking the confusing thoughts from his mind before grabbing the mop leaning against the wall and walking back into the living room. He quickly mopped the floor clean of the spilt invisibility potion and put away the cleaning supplies before slumping onto the sofa. Technoblade's piglin form fell away, despite the voices' clear protest, leaving a worried human sitting on the couch. The tundra stirred with the raging blizzard outside, the howling wind rattling the window panes. Tommy was out in that storm right now, in the middle of the night, with no warm clothing or way to defend himself. Techno bit his knuckle anxiously, tapping his foot as he stared out the ice stained window.

Techno had known Tommy since he was born. They--had been brothers after all, even if they were all adopted. The kid had never been the best survivalist, but he was tough. He'd never cried at scraped knees or bruised arms, and he'd still wanted to spar when he had fevers and colds. But even Tommy couldn't survive the snowstorm screaming outside, even with the things he'd stolen.

The hybrid sighed and stood up, running a hand through his hair before walking over to the hearth and poking at the flames with the fireplace skewer. He stared at it for a long time before he turned around and began pacing about the room.

What had the kid even been doing all the way out here? L'manburg was at least a thousand miles from the tundra, so for Tommy to be out here, clearly not dressed for the harsh winter, was baffling. And he looked as if he'd been through hell and back, with sunken eyes and bruised arms and legs, his hair matted and greasy. He'd looked at Techno like the hybrid was going to kill him. Techno was going to at first, until he saw just how pitiful the teen looked. Techno wasn't going to kill him after that, he wasn't one to go after something so weak. Besides, everything Tommy had taken was replaceable, though it would surely be annoying to do so.

But why had he felt the need to steal from him? Was it to be a brat? The kid *was* fond of stealing. But the more Techno thought about it, the more it seemed like Tommy had genuinely needed the things he took.

Techno paced for a few minutes more, head spinning, before slumping back onto the couch and shutting his eyes. Tommy would be fine. He didn't need his help anyway, not that Techno would help the traitor. He began to doze off, chat speaking in hushed whispers of nonsensical things and if Tommy would truly be okay.

Techno was awoken an hour later by a light knock at the door. The blizzard outside had died down into a soft snowfall, the wind no longer pushing against the cabin walls. Techno stood up, his boar form already slipping on. If Tommy had come back then he could finally figure out what the heck had happened to him, and why he'd come out here to steal from Techno of all people. He stalked to the door, pulling it open quickly and looking down at the visitor with stern eyes.

Philza stood on the porch, dressed in warm, blue and red robes and a blue and white bucket hat that Techno had given him to replace the green one destroyed during the L'manburg war. He shook snow off of his grey wings, the emerald that hung on a gold chain from his ear sparkling. He removed the blue hat from his dirty blonde hair and wiped more snow off of it before looking up at his eldest son. He smiled softly.

"Hey, mate!" His father grinned.

Right, Phil came to visit sometimes. Techno, though he'd never say it outloud, appreciated the company. Not that he needed to say it, Phil seemed to already understand. Plus he was the one person that hadn't betrayed him, besides maybe Dream, though frankly that guy was a little annoying sometimes.

"Oh, Phil, it's you," Techno sighed in relief, stepping out of the way so Phil could enter the cabin.

Phil chuckled warmly. "Who else would it be?" The hybrid smiled, sitting down on the couch before taking off his black, leather boots. Techno glanced out at the snow for a second before shaking his head and closing the door. He laughed dryly.

"Oh, no one. So, Phil, what brings you here?" He leaned against the wall, crossing his arms. Phil yawned, his giant wings stretching out beside him.

"Well, I just felt like coming to see you, hope that's alright."

"Yeah that's fine, it's good to see you.."

Techno laughed softly, confusion growing in his mind. Phil didn't seem to know of Tommy's visit, which was a little bit more worrying. He knew Phil and Tommy weren't on the best of terms ever since Wilbur had died, but he liked to think Phil at least kept an eye on him. Tommy coming all the way out here to Techno's home just to steal a few easily obtainable items was odd. Maybe he really was just there to be a brat. Techno stared at the floor, biting his knuckle.

"--no? Everything okay bud?" His father's voice threw him from his inner quarrel. Phil cocked his head to the side, watching Techno with concern. The hybrid laughed shakily,

"Oh yeah I'm fine. Everything's fine." He shook his head, trying his best to seem compelling. However, Phil didn't look convinced. The winged man hummed, leaning forward with his elbows on his knees and his hands crossed in front of him. He raised one eyebrow at his son before speaking in a flat voice.

“You’re biting your knuckles, lad. You only do that when you’re really anxious about something.”

Techno stopped, putting his hand behind his back.
“Well-”

“And,” Phil continued, “you’re in your piglin form. You only wear that when something’s worrying you or you have to fight.”

Techno sighed, pushing himself off the wall. Nothing could get past Phil. Techno turned his back to his father, looking out the window at the snowfall. They sat in silence for a moment.

“...Did you know Tommy came by earlier?” The boar muttered, crossing his arms.

Phil froze, the feathers on his wings puffing up nervously.
“Tommy?” Phil asked, his eyes widening.

“Yeah, I found him here digging through my stuff.”

Phil hummed, an unusual tone to his mumble.
“I had no idea. What happened?”

Techno looked at his father for a moment before looking back out at the tundra, his arms still crossed in front of him.

“Well, he stole my bag and a few potions and things before running off into the snow.”

Phil laughed dryly, though it sounded strained, forced.
“That’s Tommy for ya...”

Techno exhaled.
“When’s the last time you saw him?”

Phil looked down at his hands crossed in his lap, his wings dropping beside him. He began tapping his fingers against his knees.
“It’s been a long time, mate...” He muttered quietly, sounding sad. Techno huffed, worry growing in his chest.

“He was covered in bruises, Phil,” Techno spoke after a long silence, stepping away from the window to look at his father. “And,” The boar continued, “He looked scared. And his clothes were torn. He came all the way out here in a t-shirt and one damn shoe to be a nuisance and then ran off into the snow with my things. Any idea what the hell that was about?” he growled sourly.

Phil looked away from Techno, instead staring out the window at the frost covered tundra.
“He’s out there?” the hybrid pried, his voice cracking with concern.

“Yes,” Techno said flatly. “And I’m asking you why.”

Phil avoided the question yet again, standing up quickly, his eyes glancing over to the door. "Tech, you've gotta go get him." He said hurriedly, impatience in his tone.

The boar scoffed, glaring at his father. He rolled his eyes and went over to the chests. "I'm not going after him. So he took a few things! As annoying as it is, I'm not gonna chase after him in the middle of a snowstorm. I can just replace them, you don't-"

Phil spun around to look at Techno, concern written on his face. "No! I mean you have to help him, he's gonna get hurt out there. What was he wearing? Did he at least have warm clothes on?"

Techno raised an eyebrow at his father.

"I already told you that. Not really, but it's fine, he's long gone by now, since that was at least an hour ago," Techno sighed, ignoring the way his father looked mortified at the statement. "He took off towards the nether portal. But really it's fine, I can replace the things he took"

"Techno," Phil whined, running a hand through his hair before pulling his clenched fists to his chest. "This isn't about what he stole. He needs help, I mean you have to go save him."

"Why on earth would I help him? I don't know if you remember, Phil, but he betrayed me. He clearly doesn't need my help." Techno groaned. Shutting the chest and turning around to face Phil before leaning against the wall.

"Why would he come all the way over here then?" Phil spoke anxiously, eyes darting between his eldest son and the snow falling outside, which was quickly growing in strength, soon to be a blizzard yet again. A gust of howling wind rattled at the window panes.

"To steal from me, like I already said." Techno huffed with a growl.

"No, Tech. Because he needs you!"

Techno barked out a disbelieving laugh.

"Why on earth would he need me? He stopped needing me the second he got his precious L'manburg back and decided to betray me. He's got Tubbo."

Phil froze, staring at Techno with dull eyes as his breath hitched in his throat. Silence fell over them, the only sound the howling of the wind outside and the fire spitting in the hearth.

"I...I didn't tell you, did I?" Phil mumbled finally, hanging his head.

Techno raised an eyebrow at the hybrid.

"Tell me what, Philza?" He sneered with venom in his voice, shoulders rigid.

Phil's wings twitched behind him nervously, the man's expression twisting into an anxious pout. He inhaled sharply.

"Tommy was....exiled."

Techno pushed off the wall.

"Excuse me?"

Phil winced.

“He- something happened. He was accused of burning down George’s house and- Dream forced Tubbo to exile him.”

Techno smirked, looking away from Phil.

“Well, I guess he finally got what was coming to him.”

Phil hummed anxiously, tapping his foot on the floorboards.

“No Techno, you don’t understand! He’s- He’s not doing well! There’s this kid, Ranboo, that visits him. He told me about Tommy and Dream. Tommy’s always talking about how he understands why he was exiled, because he says no one fucking cares for him. And He said that- that Dream doesn’t treat Tommy well. He-He thinks Dream hits him!”

Something fiery and sharp shot through the boar, twisting a harsh knot in his chest. Techno glared at Phil with an icy stare as Chat began to grow louder in his head, hissing and yelling at Techno.

Kill him

Bastard

BLOOD FOR THE BLOOD GOD

Cut off his head!

Wait I thought we hated Tommy

That’s no excuse for Dream

Blood!

The hybrid snarled, stepping forward.

“ *He what?*”

Phil let out a shaky breath, his eyes glassy.

“Gods- and- and you said he was bruised? I meant to get him out of there earlier- But Ranboo could never remember how to get there. Dream never told anyone where exactly he was taking Tommy- I should’ve--- oh what have I done” The hybrid whimpered.

Phil stepped toward Techno, taking a hold of the boar’s hands.

“You have to go get him. Please. He needs us.” He spoke, sobs threatening to break through his shaky voice.

Techno frowned, looking out the window at the blizzard falling outside then down at his father. He stared up at him with tears in his eyes.

“What if he doesn’t want to see us? I mean- I’ll put a fucking stake through Dream’s head but- maybe Tommy just wants to leave, I wouldn’t blame him.” Techno stammered.

“You have to try.”

Techno hesitated, biting the inside of his cheek. But the voices screaming at him, along with the look in his father's eyes was enough to make him sigh, walk over to the door and throw on his coat. He picked up his axe and locked eyes with Phil with a short nod.

"I'll be back soon." He said simply before walking out onto the porch and stepping into the snowstorm.

He was doing this for Phil, not Tommy. He was doing this so he could hear exactly what Dream had done from Tommy himself before he sent the cruel bastard into his grave.

Right. This wasn't for Tommy.

The words didn't sound right in Techno's head.

The falling ice bit at Techno's face and legs as he trudged through the snow, holding his cape over his head so he could at least see a foot in front of him.

For ten minutes he'd been walking in the direction he'd seen Tommy run in, only knowing he was going the right way by the faint tracks left in the snow by a single shoe and a bare foot. He huffed, pushing through the tough snow with a grunt.

In the haze of snow he could see a dim purple in the distance which must've been the nether portal. He clenched his teeth and demanded himself to keep walking. The voices were speaking worriedly, whining at Techno to hurry up.

"I'm going," Techno took a deep breath through gritted teeth, looking down at the ground, "as fast as I can chat."

Chat wasn't listening, too many voices overlapping to pick apart exactly what they were saying.

Mum pog

Faster tech!

HURRY SO WE CAN KILL DREAM

Tommy better give us our stuff back

TECHNO LOOK

Techno looked up sharply at request of the voice, staring forward. The other chat members quieted, looking ahead with him. He could see the portal more clearly now, but a few ways in front of it was a deep hole in the snow. Techno stepped toward it cautiously, the voices watching in anxious silence. Techno remembered what this was. There was a deep hole that led into a deeper pond in the snow bank that most likely led into an underwater cave. Techno had meant to close it up before, as the swirling whirlpool inside had dragged anything that fell into the water. Not even Techno believed he could get out of it, the current appearing too

strong to fight against.

The pond swished dangerously with the churning water.

Techno glanced down as he stepped closer to the edge of it.

Two footprints led toward the pit, deep gashes in the snow as if the snow had given out under them, leading into the vicious, deep water.

Techno could hear his heartbeat pounding in his ears. He froze, staring into the dark whirlpool as it spun quickly. His breath caught in his throat as the snow fell around him. A high pitched ringing filled his ears, his head beginning to feel cloudy as he came to his knees at the edge of the lake, watching the snow that fell into the water be quickly pulled down.

“No..” Techno said flatly, eyes wide as he looked down at the inescapable waters.

“No no no no,” He began to beg, bringing his hands up to pull at his snow covered mane.

“NO NO NO NO” He roared, face contorted in agony.

“TOMMY!”

From the porch where Phil stood, hugging his arms tightly, he heard a distant, familiar voice cry out in anguish against the dark sky. The kind of scream that could only be caused by loss. The father choked on a sob, covering his mouth as tears filled his eyes and he fell to his knees.

He’d lost another.

The End?

Chapter Notes

Warning: slight suicidal thoughts

Tommy felt light, like he was floating. His vision was full of stars and darkness, swirling around him softly. The world was cold. Though it was not enough to make him shiver, but to where he could hardly feel it. There was nothing around him, just an unsettling silence. He could feel himself descending, falling steadily downward. He should've been panicking, as anyone would be in this odd situation, but instead a strange calmness took over his senses, soothing him into what felt like sleep.

Slowly the world started to fade back into existence. He was laying flat on his back on soft ground, looking up at the night sky. Oddly enough, the moon wasn't in sight. The stars were missing as well. Maybe it was just cloudy? That didn't make sense. Maybe an hour ago at most he had been able to look up and see a world filled with stars, glowing with the snow's reflection of the moonlight. Then he'd left Techno's house and the world had been a blizzard.

Tommy remembered when he used to have moments like these. Sometimes he'd spend hours just laying in the backyard stargazing with Wilbur, even Phil and Techno sometimes. He breathed out a content sigh, wading in the comforting quiet. When he'd started falling, he thought he was dead.

Wait.

Tommy sat up quickly, head aching and vision blurring.. Beneath him the grass was a cyan-blueish color, dotted with little pink flowers. The teen glanced around, breath quickening as he realized he didn't know where he was. He was sitting in the grass next to a large pond, filled with lily pads and bright pink flowers. Multicolored dragon flies floated lazily above the water. The land was dotted with a few trees, with bark the color of obsidian and leaves splattered with emerald green and sapphire blue. Long vines covered in pink flowers hung from the branches, along with little yellow glowing lights. Past the ponds and grass, the world was made of white stone, like he was standing on the moon. In the distance there were grey specks, suspended in the air. Suspended in the *sky*. The sky that stretched on endlessly, wrapping around the world in an ebony blanket, with a dull thrumming that seemed to echo across the wasteland. The land was completely still, with no breeze gliding through. The air was silent, the trees unbothered and the pond water motionless

Tommy stood up and glanced around frantically, shaking his head in disbelief because, surely, he must be dreaming. The boy had heard of this place. It came from fairy tales and story books. From legends read by the fire and techno's old mythology novels. It shouldn't be real. It was fake. It was a place of isolation, full of strange creatures and unthinkable dangers. It

was a place where bad kids would be sent if they didn't eat their food, that's what he was told when he was younger. Maybe he was dead then, this was the afterlife.

No, he could feel things. He could hear his breathing, his heartbeat, the dragon flies zipping around. He could feel the grass, the cold air around him, his sopping wet clothes clinging to him, the way he was shaking. He could see it all right in front of him. This world was real.

Tommy looked around frantically. The satchel was laying in the grass a few feet away. The teen dragged himself to it and began rooting through its contents. Golden apples and carrots, bread, seeds, a stack of ender pearls, and the potions he'd packed.

Tommy quickly set the bag around his shoulders and looked around, trying to ignore the way he was shaking. He didn't want to stay in the wasteland anymore. He began walking across the grass, passing ponds and trees. This island was much bigger in comparison to the other islands around, though he could still see the end of it. He avoided the edge as much as he could.

Tommy's head was spinning, still trying to fathom how he was actually in The End. It seemed impossible. Sure the nether existed, but this was different. There was no way out of here, none that Tommy knew at least. He would've loved to bathe in the beauty of this place, with its giant trees and flowers, but he was too terrified and confused to. He needed to get home. Tommy racked his head through the stories he'd heard, though each seemed to be missing something, a small detail he couldn't remember, though every story included it.

He sighed. It probably wasn't a big deal, he'd figure it out later.

He'd been walking for about 30 minutes now, land changing from grass to endstone back to grass over and over again. He passed what looked like purple cactuses in a large plain of white stone, with what might've been plums hanging from them. He didn't try it though, he knew better than to trust strange fruit. He used ender pearls to get around when he came to the edge of islands. Soon he'd be out of them, so he decided to start trying to find another route if he could. He passed ponds full of blue dragonflies and glowing cyan jellyfish. Large moths fluttered around him. He considered befriending one, but they always flew off when he got too close. Fine, he didn't need them anyway.

He was currently walking through a thick green and purple forest, the inky sky blocked by its leaves that hung overhead. He yawned as he trudged on, determined to keep going—wherever it was he was going.

Something was nagging at the back of Tommy's mind. Something other than the exhaustion wearing down on him. He ignored it though, focusing more on how tired he was. He could feel his eyes drifting shut, and his legs growing weaker.

He leaned against a tree, slumping to the ground. If he walked any further he'd pass out right in the open, and that wasn't good. The tree he chose had a large hollow groove under it that Tommy could use to hide himself. He took the satchel off his shoulders and set it leaning against him. The tree provided a little cover from anything dangerous that could be lurking

around. Tommy had been told in the fairy tales that The End was full of endermen and creatures made of shadow. He hadn't seen any shadow monsters yet, though he had passed a few endermen during his travels. Tommy scooted further into the hollow. He didn't want to sleep, but he knew he had to if he wanted to be able to get home.

As he fell asleep, he heard a deep rumbling from the sky. His tired, unthinking mind passed it off as thunder, completely disregarding the fact that it never stormed within The End.

Tommy didn't dream very much anymore. Sleep was quiet, dark, and lonely. Thunder shook the sky. Tommy had never been a big fan of Thunderstorms, though he had gotten used to them more in exile, since he was forced to deal with it every time one came. The rumbling sound of the storm was getting closer, the storm likely just coming overhead. The storms in exile had been long, and common, happening at least three times a week. He shuffled in his half asleep state, knowing soon he'd have to get up and move into some better shelter.

Tommy blinked as his eyes drifted open, his tired thoughts clearing. He was in The End. It didn't storm in The End. The teen lifted his head, looking at the forest around him. Other than the continuous rumbling, it was frighteningly silent amid the woods. He squinted, looking at an odd shape in the distance. Tommy rubbed the sleep out of his blurry eyes.

Bright, piercing, Amethyst eyes stared back at him from the thickets. Sharp white teeth were bared at him in a terrifying sneer, emitting a low growl that was only getting louder. The creature had obsidian colored scales with a purple sheen glowing off of them stretching down its long body. Grey spikes lined its neck, back, and tail, along with two curved, grey horns. Two large, black, bat-like wings were flared at its sides as it stared at the boy in front of it. It was huge, at least ten times bigger than a ravager. The beast watched him closely, its expression twisted in rage.

Tommy screamed, slamming against the trunk of the tree behind him. The dragon growled louder, stepping out of the underbrush with its huge, black claws. Tommy reached into the bag at his side, searching for something, anything, to defend himself with. His hand curled around an ender pearl and he looked up. The dragon was standing too close to him, so any pearl he threw would only slam directly into the beast. The teen cursed himself for not grabbing a sword from Technoblade's house.

The dragon prowled closer, its tail whipping behind it. Tommy pressed himself against the tree trunk as the creature came to stand before him, their faces inches apart. Tommy was pleading for his life, whispering louder and louder with his eyes pinched closed as the dragon growled at him. It opened its mouth wider, a deep roar growing in its throat

Tommy had imagined his final death several times. He'd seen himself falling into lava with a smile on his face. He'd seen his life flash before his eyes when Techno grabbed him by the shirt. His world had stopped when Dream had lit the fuses and tossed Tommy down the stone steps into the basement before the explosions went off. He never expected it to end this absurdly. He was going to die to a fucking dragon.

The roar started to die down, the space around him going silent. He was dead, the world disappearing as the creature was probably sinking its needle teeth into him. He was dead he was dead he was-.....not.... dead?

Tommy peeled one eye open, still pressed against the tree stump behind him.

The dragon looked back at him, no longer growling. It leaned closer, and Tommy flinched away as the creature sniffed his hair. It tilted its head at Tommy, looking down on him with stern, curious eyes. A short, deep rumbling came from its throat. It wasn't quite a growl, too soft and quiet to be intentionally threatening. Tommy glanced up at the dragon, a confused sound coming from his mouth.

The beast stepped back, sitting down with a loud thump on the grass. It gazed back at Tommy, watching intently as the teen quickly ducked to the ground, scooting into the hollow of the tree.

So, yeah, he'd completely forgotten about the main part of every story of The End. The Ender dragon, the protector of the realm. Yet again he was baffled. If stories in the overworld were written of this place, surely there was some way to get out, right?

He was going to get out of here before he died to this creature.

The dragon watched him carefully, not moving to attack him. Tommy clutched his satchel to his chest before setting it on his shoulders. He kept his eyes on the dragon as he slowly began to inch away. The creature stared back at him. He began cautiously scooting out of the hollow tree, then backed away from it. Once he felt he was far enough away, he turned on his heel and started running. He ran, holding onto the satchel tightly as he tumbled through the multicolored undergrowth, vaulting over fallen logs and tripping on roots in the green and blue grass. The dragon was quick to follow. He could hear it crashing through the forest after him, though it couldn't quite weave through the trees as well as Tommy could, god that thing was huge.

Tommy kept looking over his shoulder, watching out for the dragon.

He wasn't looking where he should've been. The white stone beneath him gave out and he was sliding down a steep cliff, towards the edge of the floating island. He screamed, trying to grab a foothold on the rocky wall. His hands and heels scraped against the white stone as he tumbled down on his back. The void sat just in front of him, and he yelped as he barreled towards the endless fall that awaited him.

He came to a halt just at the base of the island, something tugging him backward by his neck. He dangled in the air, just above the blank abyss. Tommy kicked his feet as he whimpered, breathing heavily. He gasped, looking up at what had saved him from the fall.

The Ender dragon held him by the collar of his shirt, sharp teeth digging into the fabric as it hoisted him back up onto the floating island. He was dropped onto the white stone at the creature's feet. It watched as he quickly stumbled around, backing away on his hands and feet. He stayed well away from the island's sides, practically hugging the ground, happy to be back on solid earth. Everything was silent, other than his ragged breathing. He looked up at

the animal with a baffled look on his face. Silence ensued as they stared at each other, neither making any movement.

Minutes seemed to pass before anything happened. The dragon huffed, glancing toward the edge of the island cliff face. It growled softly, its gaze returning to the perplexed teen shivering on the ground in front of it before turning away, retreating back into the forest.

Tommy sat in shock, watching the beast leave him there, sitting at the edge. A strangled sound came out of him as he sat there in shock. He'd almost just died. But then, he was saved! By a fucking *dragon*.

When Tommy was younger, and Phil had told him stories of The End, though at that time they were only fairy tales, Tommy had been fascinated by the dragon. A mythical beast that ruled the skies. Tommy had asked Phil if he'd ever get to meet her, the Ender Dragon, to which Phil chuckled, his expression soft. He'd ruffled Tommy's golden hair with a thoughtful smile and told him that sadly dragons weren't real. Maybe they were once, but not anymore.

Tommy was gonna kick Phil's ass when he got home.

When he'd become stable enough to stand without almost falling over, the boy started walking back into the forest against his better judgement, following the tracks the giant creature had left. For such a large beast, it sure moved fast. He quickened his pace, glancing around as he walked on, stepping in sync with the footprints left in the grass.

He found the dragon a few minutes of walking later. The beast was laying in the grass next to one of the many large ponds scattered in the forest, it's eyes fluttering closed as it basked amid the forest.

It's eyes snapped open as Tommy stepped out of the trees. Tommy cleared his throat nervously with a timid wave.

"Uh- hi."

The dragon stared at him boredly before laying her head back down on the grass, turning on her side and facing away from the teen.

Tommy frowned nervously, hesitantly stepping closer to the creature. "I'm uh- not sure why you saved me back there- if that's what you were doing- but well- thank you, i guess?"

The dragon huffed as a response, a low rumbling in its throat. Tommy slowly lowered himself onto the grass, sitting a good distance away from the creature with his legs criss crossed. He sat there quietly, not sure what he was expecting to happen, before picking a small flower from the grass and examining it.

"Well...I'm Tommy. Do- do you have a name?" He asked hesitantly.

The dragon didn't reply.

Tommy nodded to himself.

"Right, right, you probably can't understand me much."

Tommy hunched over, trying to distract himself from the awkward silence. His head was screaming at him, trying to figure out what the fuck he was doing. The teen let out a low whistle.

“Nice place you got here...”

The dragon ignored him again.

Tommy huffed, leaning his elbow on his knee and resting his chin on his fist.

“Can’t believe I’m sitting here talking to a fuckin animal, man. This has got to be the lowest point of my existence, y’know? I’m here talking to you, and you can’t even understand me,” Tommy rambled, leaning back to look at the sky. The forest was silent, other than the dragon flies fluttering around and what sounded like cicadas in the distance. He groaned.

“And I’m still talking to you.”

Tommy glanced around before inching closer to the dragon, staring at the ground. The dragon didn’t move, other than a slightly bothered flick of her tail.

“Just double checkin’, you’re not gonna eat me, right?”

The dragon murmured, shifting the giant wings on her back.

Tommy smiled softly, accepting that as a yes. He liked to think they were sharing a conversation. He hadn’t spoken to anyone in awhile. Whenever he tried to talk to Dream he was told to stop talking, or that he was annoying. The teen scooted closer to the dragon again until he was just a few feet away from her. He was happy to have someone to talk to for the first time in a few weeks, even if he couldn’t understand her responses.

“I like your wings. You know my dad’s got wings?”

The dragon hummed, eyes still shut.

“Yeah! He’s got these big beautiful wings! He won’t tell me how he *really* got them, but when I was little he told me he got them as a gift from an angel. Of course that’s ridiculous though, he’s a bitch.” The teen grumbled, crossing his arms.

Tommy looked around, continuing his ramble.

“I really wish you could understand me, that’d be cool. I don’t know if you’d be able to talk back but-...I’m sure we could figure something out, y’know? Maybe make up some kind of code or some shit.”

The dragon didn’t reply.

Tommy sighed, picking at the blades of grass beneath him. He had no way of understanding this creature. If she knew any way out, he couldn’t possibly ask her.

Tommy gasped, remembering something. He had picked up a few ender words from Ranboo, just some basic phrases that he could use to befriend enderman, though Tommy hadn’t really seen the point in that. Tommy cleared his throat, trying to remember how to mimic the strange sound.

“*hello*” Tommy tried his best to chirp like an enderman, watching the huge creature beside him closely.

The dragon stirred suddenly. Sitting up quickly and looking at Tommy. She hummed a reply, though Tommy wasn’t sure what it meant.

Tommy laughed excitedly.

“You understood that?”

The dragon tilted her head, confused.

“Uhh-“ Tommy racked through his thoughts, trying to remember anything else he knew in the ender language.

“*I’m Tommy*”

The dragon groaned softly, leaning closer to Tommy with curious eyes. Tommy smiled.

“*your-*” he hesitated, blanking on the word for a moment. “*name?*”

The dragon shook her head softly, blinking slowly. Tommy frowned.

“Well, that’s okay.” Tommy grinned. He sat for a moment, trying to think of anything else he’d learned. He and Ranboo didn’t speak too often, only the few times when he’d first met him, at George’s house, and...a few times during his time at Logstedshire. They didn’t tend to talk about the Enderman language too much, as Tommy never expected to need it. The few times they had were when he caught Ranboo mumbling things in ender to himself.

“Hm...sorry Mrs, I think that’s all I’ve got” the teen chuckled. He hesitated for a moment.

“Well, besides *help*” the dragon froze, watching Tommy. She growled something worriedly.

Tommy just shook his head.

“Sorry, I don’t speak dragon, lady.”

The dragon cooed softly, looking down at Tommy’s bruised self and torn clothes before staring off into the distance.

She stood up suddenly and stalked over to Tommy, lowering her head. The boy crawled backward on his hands and feet, stammering scaredly.

“Uh- what’s uh-“ he laughed nervously, staring up at the creature standing over him. She leaned down slowly and grabbed the back of his shirt, hoisting him into the air. Tommy yelped.

“Oh- okay- guess I’m up now, please don’t eat me dragon lady,” he stuttered wildly, swinging his feet as he was held above the ground.

The dragon opened her great wings before standing on her hind legs and flapping them beside her. She lifted into the air, shooting straight through the canopy. Tommy screamed as she dragged him by the collar of his shirt into the dark sky. He pulled his knees to his chest

and clutched his satchel, trying to stay calm in case the dragon could smell fear or some shit like that.

“Okay- okay- i swear to fucking god if you drop me I’m gonna be so pissed”

The air below them was a blur as they flew, gliding quickly over the floating islands. The dragon hummed something softly.

Tommy hated heights most of the time. They posed too much danger. He should be terrified, begging for his life. But an odd calmness fell over him. The wind ruffled his hair as the dragon carried him, passing islands and empty open sky. He laughed stiffly, attempting to keep his eyes off the never ending fall below him.

“Where exactly a-are we going, Ma’am?” He chuckled, eyes wide. The dragon hummed something deeply, keeping her eyes forward.

For a while they flew just like that, Tommy blabbering on as he tended to when he was nervous. They passed several islands that piqued the teen’s interest that the dragon didn’t bother even glancing at, flying forward with her vision set steadily.

Tommy was fiddling with the straps of his bag worriedly, growing more and more nervous as time passed. The dragon made a throaty sound and angled her wings, quickly headed downwards. Tommy yelped as they landed on another island with a thud, the dragon still holding him by the back of his shirt. He glanced up, eyes widening and his mouth hanging open.

In Front of them stood a huge, glowing city. The structures were crafted of a purple and off white brick and hung motionlessly in the air. The buildings looked as if they’d been turned upside down, the walls growing wider as they stretched high into the air. Bright, silver lanterns hung from the sides, casting a yellow light along the walls. Small bridges connected each building to another. A few towers were scattered about the island, branching off like huge castles in twisting spirals.

Tommy sighed breathlessly, staring up in wonder at the labyrinth of a city with a small smile on his face.

“Ho-ly-shit. What the fuck is this?” the boy laughed ecstatically, eyes darting around as he took in every inch of the beautiful sight before him.

The dragon let out a soft purr before stalking forward, carrying Tommy with her. She walked over to one of the towers before standing up on her hind legs and setting Tommy on the balcony. He quickly jumped to his feet, whirling around shakily to face the dragon he was now eye to eye with.

“Uh- thanks.” he spun around, tilting his head back to look at the city. “Can- Can I take a look around?”

The dragon blinked slowly, so the teen took that as a yes. He walked forward through the doorway into the building. The structure was completely empty, except for a few lanterns

hanging from the ceilings. A staircase stretched along the walls upward. Tommy began walking up the stairs, running his hand along the wall. There was a loud scrabbling sound outside. When he looked through one of the windows, he saw the dragon scaling the walls, effortlessly following him. The dragon jumped to a neighbouring building floating beside the tower he was currently in, then turned to look at Tommy, tilting her head as if beckoning to follow him. He raced up the stairs and stepped onto a bridge, following the creature.

“Does- Does anyone even live here?” He called out hesitantly. The only response was the quiet echo of his own voice floating amid the night sky. The teen sighed.

For a few minutes he followed her through the labyrinth of towers and castle-like structures, startling each time the dragon leapt to a different wall. Soon she began simply crawling along bridges and reaching over to easily accessible buildings so as to not frighten the teen further.

After a little bit, the dragon finally stopped running through the maze of buildings and settled on top of a large room in seemingly the middle of the city, gesturing with her head for Tommy to go in. He listened, stepping off the bridge and through the doorway.

Unlike every other building, this room was actually furnished. There was a large desk made of simple white wood, along with a small wooden stool sitting under it, and in front of the table was a large, open window. Off to the side there was a fancy looking bed, blanketed with purple sheets and a lilac comforter with white patterns and designs. On one of the walls sat a wooden dresser with silver handles.

The teen had his mouth hanging open in shock. Despite being so simple, the little room somehow looked frighteningly regal.

“Jesus. And this place is abandoned? Why wouldn’t anyone wanna live here?”

Tommy laughed in awe as he looked about the chambers, smiling as the dragon poked her head through the large open window with a quiet chirp.

“What, is this for me?”

The dragon tilted her head, a bit confused as to what the human was saying. Tommy shrugged.

“I shall take that as a yes.”

He walked over to the dresser and pulled the door open, looking at what was stored in the armoire. He gasped and quickly pulled the clothes out. In his arms he held a white poet’s shirt, A long, dark purple coat covered in silver details that fell to Tommy’s knees, and black jeans.

“Ohoho, I don’t give a shit who this belongs to, they should have been here to make sure I didn’t take it, isn’t that right?” He grinned, setting the clothes down on the desk and holding the purple jacket out in front of him. Pinned just below the collar were two shiny, green, blue, and yellow orbs, linked together with a silver chain around the neck. Tommy winced at his reflection in the jewel but shook it off.

“Alright ma’am, you look away while I put this stuff on.” He said calmly, dropping the satchel on his shoulder to the floor.

The dragon blinked at him curiously, not moving from her spot.

“Right,” the teen mumbled, “forgot you don’t understand me.” He walked over to the window and lightly shoved the dragon away. She finally seemed to understand as he shooed her away and slunk off, climbing back onto the roof.

Once he’d finally changed , he stuck his head out the window, leaning on the desk.

“Alright Mrs, you can come back down! I mean if you wanna-” He was startled as the dragon appeared in front of him, her head upside down as she smiled at him with sharp, pearly white teeth. She noticed the new clothes he was wearing and he watched amusedly as her eyes lit up. The dragon’s tail thumped against the roof as she let out what resembled a delighted bark. Tommy grinned cockily, turning in a circle with his arms out beside him to show off his new change in wardrobe.

“Oh, you like it?” He crowed brightly, raising an eyebrow as he pulled at the collar, showing off the coat. “It’s just something I pulled together.” The teen barked with laughter before walking back over to the desk and sitting down on the tiny stool. He ran his hand along the table top before reaching down and opening a drawer. He pulled out a few books and paper and set them on the table with a thump. “I hope whoever lives here won’t mind me going through their things.”

He opened one of the books and frowned. It was written entirely in a different language. The symbols on the paper looked similar to the ones in the old books back in the library, which Tommy was starting to guess was Ender. He sighed, setting the book to the side and opening the next. When he was met with the same thing, Tommy scowled. He opened the final book and practically jumped out of his seat. Written within the journal were english words, and next to those more of the odd symbols, along with pronunciations.

“Holy shit!” He cried, bouncing on his toes enthusiastically, “It’s a whole ass dictionary!” The teen held the book out to the dragon. The beast hummed in response, leaning forward to sniff the book. Tommy turned it again, flipping through the pages.

“There’s not alot written in here, but I’ll make it work! Big man Tommy has got this!” He set the book back down and opened another drawer in the desk, instantly going still. Inside the large drawer sat what looked vaguely like a communicator. Something echoed in Tommy’s mind, the distant ring of explosions and angry screams clawing at his brain.

He shook his head quickly, throwing the thoughts out as he held the communicator up. “How do they even have one of these? I thought Sam said Dream made them all..” He questioned, standing up and shifting his weight to one hip as he turned his back to the dragon. He poked at the screen, watching with a sinking feeling as the device flickered to life with a whining beep. He squinted at the list of names, the odd setup of the communicator unfamiliar to him, before clicking on his own name.

Instantly the chat was filled with messages. He was only able to catch a few sentences as the words scrolled by, quickly replaced by more.

Technoblade: Answer me god dammit

Dream: where are you
where the hell are you Tommy

Ranboo: You weren't at logsted today, right? Dream told me you were out exploring but I'm not sure I believe him.

Tubbo: Please just talk to me

He sucked in sharply, looking away from the screen as more messages he didn't bother to read flew past.

He cursed himself for even opening the device in the first place. He was supposed to be getting away from them all, right? It was for the best that he did this, to finally give his friends and family the peace they deserved and stop causing trouble everywhere he stepped. He needed to move on, and leave that life behind.

So how come his fingers itched to pick up the device and tell them to come help? How his heart longed to tell his family that he was okay, even if they didn't care?

His thoughts were interrupted by a deep rumbling behind him. He spun around to see the dragon looking at him sadly, resting her head on the windowsill. Her eyes looked similar to a dog's, glassy and somber.

"Oh- sorry if I worried you there." He chuckled sheepishly, scratching the back of his neck. The creature in front of him gestured to the device he was holding behind his back with a tilt of her head.

"Oh- this? It's- it's nothing. It doesn't matter." He sighed. The dragon made a strange sound in her throat but didn't pry any further.

It was fine. Tommy didn't need to worry about them until he got out of here, which he was going to do right now. Soon. In a little bit. But no one would care, right? They couldn't possibly find him here. Wasn't that what he wanted?

When he'd run off, he'd thought it to be for good. Tommy believed that once he was gone, he was never going to go back. He would escape somewhere where he'd never be found again.

So why did it hurt so much to know that now he truly didn't have to worry about that? Being found? How come his heart ached knowing he couldn't turn on his heel and run back to his home?

But as he stood there, a somber realization settled upon his shoulders.

Maybe he didn't need to leave this place.

Tommy exhaled with a hum, looking about the room curiously.

“So uh-...is this for me?”

The dragon tilted her head in confusion before lightly shoving the stack of books on the desk with her nose

“Oh! Right!” He picked up the book on the top of the shelf and began quickly flipping through the pages, muttering about how disorganized the writings were and the journal’s lack of a table of contents. He smiled, finally finding the word he was looking for. He waved his arm around him, gesturing to the room, before squinting at the book and reading the words scrawled on it.

“*this is mine?*”

The dragon blinked, slowly lowering her head in a nod.

Her eyes held a rare kindness, a kind of care that Tommy hadn’t seen in—He wasn’t sure how long.

“Oh,” he cleared his throat, “well uh- thanks. Does this mean—uhhh,” he flipped through the book again, “we’re *friends?*”

The dragon bellowed softly, emitting a strange clicking sound as she nodded. It almost looked like she was smiling. Hell, maybe she was. The boy laughed.

“That’s- that’s good. I don’t have many friends nowadays.”

He tilted his head, looking at the dragon with his eyebrows furrowed.

“Say, I can’t just keep calling you ‘ma’am’ and ‘lady’ all the time, can I?”

The dragon hummed curiously, tilting her head the same way as Tommy. The boy laughed, glancing down at the book in front of him and flipping through the pages.

“*your*” he pointed at the creature, “*name is* Clementine.”

The Dragon chirped happily, her tail thumping loudly against the wall. She clambered down the side of the wall, shoving her head through the window toward Tommy. The teen laughed as Clementine licked his face, dropping the journal on the table before holding the Dragon’s head. He pressed his forehead to her nose, a faint smile on his face.

“Yeah, you like that name?” He chuckled. “Clementine. it suits you.”

He pulled away, to his own dismay , and looked back down at the Ender book. He slowly picked it up with a tight inhale, swallowing as he spoke the next words.

“*me.....Stay.*”

As he said the words, he felt relief fall across him, carrying away a distress he didn’t realize he’d had the whole time.

Clementine roared happily, flapping her wings with a wind that could've knocked Tommy over, had he been in front of them. The teen grinned, turning to the door.

“Let's go look around.” He waved the dragon over, cocking his head over his shoulder before leaving the room. The dragon followed, clambering around the outside of the building.

Clementine followed loyally after Tommy. Unbeknownst to the teen, he wasn't the only one who had been lonely.

Manhunt

Chapter Summary

Warnings! Death mention. Abuse mention.

It was a sunny day in L'manburg. The sun shone through the clouds in rays of yellow and orange, bathing the streets in light. The citizens were chatting happily in the center of town, laughing about. A few civilians were working together to build a stage of some sorts

As Techno walked through the portal, stepping onto the warm concrete, he grimaced, hearing the distant laughter. How could laughter exist when Tommy was gone? How was that possible?

When Techno collapsed at the edge of his brother's watery grave, the world felt as if it had come crashing down around him, like the sun was going cold, like the rivers had stopped flowing.

And here were the citizens of L'manburg, laughing. Like the world wasn't going to end any second.

Techno waited until the familiar whir of the nether portal rang out quietly and Phil stepped into place beside him. He was holding his hat in shaky hands, his grasp so tight he could rip through the fabric at any second. He looked up at Techno. The man's eyes, usually bright blue and full of life, were dull now. His unruly blonde hair fell over his face. He'd refused to properly take care of himself in the past week since they'd found out Tommy was gone. Each morning Techno had to make sure Phil got out of bed at the least, practically dragging the man upward as he repeated over and over again that he didn't want to either. Phil was a mess at this point, almost constantly lying awake in bed and rejecting Techno's requests to get some sleep.

Not that Techno was much better, his fur unbrushed and his knees shaky as he stared at the road ahead of him.

The voices had been quiet lately, only a select few speaking. When they did, it was only when Techno was slipping, and they had to painstakingly drag him out of the hole he'd carved for himself. It had only been the voices that were able to drag him out of the snow. Without them he'd likely still be lying there. Maybe he'd even be in the water that killed Tommy.

It's okay, Techno. Keep going

Protect Phil.

“Are you ready, Phil?” He swallowed, staring ahead.

“No,” The man beside him choked out, his wings falling more.

“....Me neither.” He set his hand on his father’s shoulder and began walking forward, into the streets of L’manburg.

As they turned corners, the chatter of the civilians only grew louder, the joyful sound ringing in Techno’s ears, loud enough to make him wince. Phil had his head down, quiet sobs shaking his figure as he held his hat to his chest. His wings, unkept and dotted with broken feathers, dragged along the wooden floorboards behind him. Techno swallowed hard. He’d get better, right? He would. He’d been just like this when Wilbur was gone. Somehow he seemed worse.

It worried Techno that his father was this bad, when he’d been the one to kill Wilbur in the first place. Tommy’s death was taking its toll. Hard.

They stepped into the center of town, Techno holding his eyes stern. Instantly the crowd’s voices died, every face turning to look at the two anarchists that had stepped into the square. Every civilian's face was filled with fear, quickly replaced by confusion as they watched the piglin and avian, one who looked as if they were about to cry, and one who already was.

Techno inhaled quietly, mentally preparing himself for the news they’d come to pass on. “Where is Tubbo?”

One person stepped forward, their arms crossed in front of them. Quackity, Techno recognized.

“Why do you want to know?” The man asked, raising one eyebrow and tilting his head back. It seemed like he was trying to appear intimidating, raising his shoulders to look taller than he was.

“Me and Philza wish to share news with the residents of L’manburg.” Techno sneered gruffly, looking down at the man with distaste.

Quackity was about to object when a new voice spoke.

“I’m right here.” The crowd stepped aside, revealing Tubbo. He was wearing a neat blue suit with golden shoulder pads and buttons and a red tie. The scars from the fireworks Techno set off had faded a little bit, but the boar could still see the fear and hate in the ram hybrid's glare. A second figure followed him. Another hybrid, at least 8 feet tall and covered in black and white markings. Techno recognized Ranboo a little from Phil’s stories.

“Technoblade,” Tubbo said coolly, crossing his arms behind his back and tilting his chin up. Ranboo stepped up right behind him, fiddling with his claws nervously. “I didn’t expect to see you here. I assume you’ve brought more tnt with you?”

Techno growled under his breath, but stopped when he felt Phil’s hand rest on his shoulder. “Not today, President. For now I simply just want to pass on a message.”

Tubbo hummed, slightly disbelieving.

“Well then, shall we go speak in private?”

“No no, that’s alright. I’ll go ahead and do your job for you by letting everyone know right now.”

Tubbo scowled at the piglin. Ranboo set a comforting hand on the hybrid’s shoulder and pulled him a few steps back, eyeing Techno with a wary gaze.

“Right,” the president glowered, “The stage is yours.” The way the boy said it carried a mocking tone. Techno heard two more voices laugh in the crowd and turned to see Fundy and Quackity snickering to each other. They turned their heads and cleared their throats, avoiding the piglin’s gaze.

“A week ago something awful happened,” He spoke, letting out a shuddering breath. He could feel himself slipping, ready to break down again. Techno hesitated, only driven forward by Phil leaning his head against his shoulder.

“I would like you all to know that this happened due to your insolence and neglect. Each person here is responsible for what happened. You’re all to blame. Because of your carelessness and incivility this horrible thing took place. It is because you were a coward that couldn’t deal with a little conflict. I regret not killing everyone here when I had the chance.” Techno snarled, taking a deep breath to restrain himself from launching at the throat of the first person he saw. Tubbo spoke before he could continue, pointing rudely at the boar as he stepped directly in front of Techno.

“Are you threatening my country?!” The teen hissed in outrage, ignoring the Enderman hybrid that was trying to drag him back by the sleeve.

“You’re goddamn lucky I’m not!” Techno shouted back.

Tubbo growled, eyes wide. He opened his mouth to speak but was cut off by Techno.

“Tommy is *dead*. And it is *your Fault*.” The boar spat in a voice laced with venom, staring directly at the teen standing in front of him. The crowds grew silent, not even a gasp or an anguished scream coming from the people. How dare they.

“I’m sorry?” Tubbo whispered, tilting his head down and staring at Techno through his eyebrows. Ranboo had stopped trying to pull him away, standing now in shocked silence.

“Did all those explosions make you deaf? I said he’s dead! And he died alone, exiled by a country he built.” Techno straightened his shoulders, glaring with eyes full of malice at the crowd.

A few disheartened gasps rang out among the crowd, and Techno couldn’t help the bitter happiness he felt at hearing it, knowing they were finally realizing just what they’d done.

Tubbo stood straight, breathing heavily as enraged huffs raked through his chest. For a moment they sat there , the two hybrids staring each other down.

He launched himself at Techno, running straight for the boar. He didn't make it far, Ranboo throwing his arms around the boy's waist when he saw Techno reach for the axe holstered at his hip. Tubbo was howling, swinging at Techno uselessly as he tried to kick Ranboo away from him

"WHERE IS HE? WHAT DID YOU DO TO HIM?! I'LL FUCKING KILL YOU, YOU HEAR ME?!" The boy screamed, clawing at Ranboo's arms. The hybrid held him tightly, hissing in pain. Tubbo was too blinded and upset to notice how he was hurting the boy.

"I didn't do anything, you brat! He drowned! He ran off into the woods and drowned!" Techno roared back, ignoring the shaky arm Phil put in front of him to stop the piglin.

"LIAR! YOU'RE A LIAR!" Tubbo had tears streaming down his face now, his expression twisted in anger and fear. Fear that it really was true.

"He's not Tubbo." Phil whispered. Tubbo stopped fighting against Ranboo, staring wide eyed at the hybrid. He inhaled sharply, silent now as he looked back and forth between the hybrids, practically begging them to tell him it was a lie.

"Tommy's gone."

"He's right."

Every head snapped around, turning to look at the figure that had spoken. Dream stepped forward through the crowds, a netherite axe strapped across his back.

Techno and Phil bristled, the boar growling and the avian's feathers rising. The voices began chanting something quietly, speaking in whispered, angry hisses.

Ranboo set Tubbo down, his hands on the boy's shoulders in case he tried to charge at Techno again.

"Dream! You were supposed to be watching him! Where-where- what happened?!" The boy cried, staring at the man.

Dream came to stand in the middle of the crowd, his head hung in quiet sadness. A low growl came from Techno's throat as the figure spoke.

"A week ago I returned to Tommy's place of stay and found him missing. I discovered him later that day in the snow. He was-...he was dead."

Tubbo gasped, slapping a hand over his mouth. Ranboo pulled him closer, wincing in pain as a tear rolled down the hybrid's cheek.

"How- How?! You-you said you'd t-take care of him!" The ram cried through his fist. Holding onto Ranboo's arm tightly.

Dream sighed, straightening his shoulders. The masked man tilted his head, looking at Techno and Phil.

"He was murdered by Technoblade and Philza."

The crowd gasped, a few crying out in pained shrieks. Techno seized the axe from his hip, snarling. The voices were screaming now. Philza straightened his wings out at his sides.

“You shithead! We did not!” Phil screamed. He’d stopped crying entirely, a blind rage taking over the avian.

“Really? I distinctly remember Techno saying that Tommy should die. Face it! You murdered him.”

The crowd had slunk closer to the quarreling group, now completely surrounding them. A few citizens had pulled their weapons, brandishing armour and swords. Sam, quackity, and Fundy stepped forward, staring at Techno and Phil with blood curdling glares. Tubbo was furious, trying yet again to attack Techno and Phil. Ranboo looked as if he was about to let him go, the teen making a series of enraged sounding enderman warbles.

“He’s lying to you!” Techno shouted over the angry yells of the crowd. “I didn’t kill him! I found him in my home and before I could stop him he ran off. I only found him hours later. His footprints led to a lake that had a whirlpool in it. He drowned. I couldn’t save him.” The last sentence was almost a whisper.

“And Dream is trying to turn you against us!” Phil cried, his wings flaring.

“Lies!” Dream cried, pulling his axe from his back and pointing at Phil. “You’re really going to believe these two? After everything they’ve done?”

“And you’re really going to believe the man that abuses a child?!” Phil screamed.

The crowd froze, eyes widening. Everything stopped. Every face contorted into genuine surprise, eyes snapping between Phil and Dream.

The masked man was facing Phil, completely still. His shoulders were raised in alarm as he looked at the avian.

“Yeah, this fucking bastard abused Tommy,” Phil stood up straighter, stepping forward as Dream faltered. “When Techno found him in his home he said he looked terrified. And y’know what else? He was covered in bruises.

Dream *hits* him.”

Every person there gasped, looking at Dream in shock.

The man stuttered for a second, gesturing towards Phil and Techno.

“Don’t tell me you believe this!” He argued, “You can’t trust them! Everything they’re saying is a lie!”

“No it’s not.”

Phil looked up in surprise. Everyone turned to look at the hybrid teen behind Tubbo, who stared in shock.

“He-He did hit him,” Ranboo stammered, staring at the ground as the realization dawned on him, “I- I never knew who to tell when I remembered. The only person I thought could do anything about it was Phil.”

“Shut. Up. Ranboo” Dream hissed, his head lowered and his shoulders raised. His hands were shaking as he clutched his axe.

The enderman hybrid stood up straighter, looking down at Dream with pure hatred. “You-you abused him! He was covered in handprints and bruises! You are a *monster!*”

The crowd pressed closer, everyone staring at Dream now. The sound of angry whispers and weapons being raised and dragged along the ground rang out across the square.

“We did not kill Tommy. If anyone is to blame for this it is *you*” Techno snarled.

The first to strike was Techno. He ran forward with his head full of voices. They chanted as he lifted the Axe above his head, swinging with enough force to *kill*.

YEAH GET HIM!

BLOOD FOR THE BLOOD GOD!

BRING HIS HEAD TO TOMMY!

LET CLEMENTINE EAT HIM HAHA

BLOOD!

BLOOD!

Dream rolled to the side, barely avoiding Techno’s swing. He jumped to his feet just in time to avoid a netherite blade swinging over his head. Phil raised the Sword beside him and swung again towards Dream’s knees. The masked man jumped swiftly. He pulled a pearl from his pocket and threw it.

The pearl shattered against someone's sword, and Dream barely had time to jump out of the way of Quackity slicing towards him. The entire crowd was after him now, the town filled with angry screams and swords striking the ground as Dream dodged them.

He dodged a pickaxe being swung and turned. Techno’s axe cut him across the face, chipping off part of the mask he wore. The floorboards beneath him cracked as the weapon lodged itself in the wood. Dream stumbled back startledly, quickly regaining his composure and jumping just in time to avoid an oncoming arrow. He took off running down the streets of L’manburg, quickly pursued by practically every other citizen. He pulled another pearl out and threw it, running until he disappeared in a cloud of purple smoke.

Techno was busy pulling his axe from the floor to chase after him. He tugged on it with a grunt and turned, ready to kill Dream. A hand on his shoulder stopped him. Phil stood beside Techno, panting for breath.

“I’ll go after him. You stay here,” Phil said hurriedly, clutching his sword.

“No! I’m going after him-“

Phil turned to look behind them, gesturing for Techno to do the same. When Techno saw what was wrong, he froze. Phil patted the boar on the shoulder and took off in a flurry of beating wings and scattered feathers.

Techno sighed, dropping his axe to the floor with a thud as Phil took to the sky, chasing down Dream.

Techno hated everyone there. They’d exiled Tommy because they were cowards, too afraid to face Dream.

He knew he wasn’t much better. He had told his little brother to die. Now that he had, Techno hated himself for it, wishing he’d never said those words.

Not many people were left in town, the majority of them in the crowd hunting down Dream. Techno walked across the town’s center towards Tubbo. The boy was curled up in a miserable heap, shaking wildly as sobs tore through him. Ranboo sat beside him, struggling to hold back tears as he tried to comfort the goat hybrid breaking down in his lap. Techno let the boar form slip away, the voices obliging quietly. Soon all that was left of the mighty piglin was a human, his hair wild as it fell around his shoulders, his eyes sad.

Not a day passed where Techno didn’t regret what he’d done to Tubbo at the festival. He’d spent sleepless nights, screaming at the voices, asking them why they’d made him do it. He’d noticed that every time he and the teen had unfortunate encounters, Tubbo always looked afraid of the boar, his haunted gaze reflecting fireworks and screams.

He hated Tubbo for betraying him. But for now, Techno could set aside the grudges. For Tommy.

Techno rested his hand on Tubbo’s back, lowering himself to his knees beside the boy. The teen looked up, his sobs faltering. Beside him sat the man he’d spent days running through fields with, along with Tommy and Wilbur. This was the fighter he’d spent countless hours with, practicing their sword fighting. The man who had lent him books and listened quietly whenever Tubbo wanted to ramble about something. This wasn’t the face of the mighty boar that had pulled the trigger and taken one of Tubbo’s lives. This was Techno, his childhood friend.

He hadn’t seen that face in awhile.

Techno hugged back when Tubbo collapsed onto him, sobbing mournfully, whispering quietly about Tommy and how he’d been the one to send him away with Dream. Ranboo hugged Tubbo too. They sat there quietly, mourning. All of them cried together. There were no enemies in that moment, no grudges, no hatred. Just friends crying for the one they’d lost.

It Could Burn Your Skin

Chapter Summary

Sorry bout such a short chapter!

The next one will be super long! Just wanted to add this part in for angst purposes >:)

Chapter Notes

Tw's! Mention of abuse, death, scissors

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Phil was sat on the couch, staring out the window at the frosted tundra. The tears on his face had dried long ago, leaving him in a stunned silence. He didn't possibly think he could cry anymore.

They'd returned from L'manburg only a few hours ago, arriving in the snow biome just before the sun had set. As soon as they'd come home Techno had quietly excused himself and went into his room. For a while the house had only been filled with the sound of Techno sniffing to himself and Phil trying to distract himself from his thoughts, busying himself with any chores he could find. About an hour ago Techno had stopped crying, and the house had been silent since.

Phil had been trying his best to clean up the house. For a week he'd been useless, leaving Techno to do everything, and he felt guilty about it. But now there was nothing left for him to do, so he was sitting in the living room in silence, staring ahead with a blank expression.

His mind was spinning with dread and regret as he sat there, his robes clenched in his shaky fists.

Dream got away.

He got away. Phil could only blame himself. He had wings for fucksake, and he'd still lost Dream. His son's abuser was out there. The man that might as well have been his son's murderer was gone with no punishment, no consequence for what he'd done.

L'manburg had promised Phil and Techno that they would have patrols searching day and night, but it just wasn't enough. Phil wanted to *kill* Dream himself. He wanted to bring the

tyrant to Techno and throw him down at his son's feet so they could both watch the light die from his eyes. Phil rarely hated— *truly* hated someone other than himself, but now he couldn't find it in himself to feel anything but malice, and the desire to *end*.

The bedroom door opened down the hall. Phil looked up.

“Tech?” Phil called quietly.

Techno stepped into the living room, holding a pair of scissors in his shaky, calloused hands. He looked at Phil sadly, his eyes red and puffy from crying. His expression was somber as he stood there. He looked so small in his human form. The powerful warrior Phil had raised since he was young was gone, leaving a terrified looking hybrid in its place.

The long, silky hair that Techno usually wore proudly down his back was now cut just above his shoulders, the ends messy and uneven. Techno was trembling, shaking like he was going to fall over at any second.

“Oh tech...” Phil gasped softly, standing up and walking over to his son. He pulled his hands through the uneven strands of hair as Techno stood there quietly, his eyes glossy as if he wasn't actually seeing Phil.

“You didn't have to do this...” he sighed, cupping Techno's cheek in his hand.

Techno has always been fond of following what piglin's had done since the beginning of time. He believed they were as superior as humans. It was piglin culture that long hair or fur was a sign of power and respect in the clans.

Phil had only seen Techno with his hair this short once.

As kids, Techno had accidentally attacked Wilbur one day when the voices had become too much for him to bear. They were playfully sparring when the piglin hybrid had launched himself at Wilbur, pinning the boy to the ground with his sword raised above his head. Luckily for all of them, Phil had gotten there in time to drag Techno away. When Techno had finally come to and realized what he'd done, the boy had locked himself in his room for hours.

When he'd finally come out, he held a pair of kitchen scissors in his hands, and his hair was cut at his shoulders. He'd kept whispering over and over again how sorry he was to Wilbur even though the boy kept insisting he was alright. The only injury he'd gotten was a light scratch above the knee.

Later, when everything had calmed and Wilbur had convinced Techno he was okay, Wilbur had fixed Techno's hair, muttering amusedly about how his brother could've at least tried to make his hair look a bit neater.

Techno leaned into Phil's hand, another tear rolling down his face.

“I let him die...” Techno whispered sadly, shutting his eyes tightly as he took in a shuddering breath.

Phil sighed softly.

“No Tech, this isn’t your fault. You-....you couldn’t have known.”

The hybrid shook his head, tears falling down his sullen face.

“But-but it is. He-...he was running from *me*. I- I was so rude to him when I knew he was scared...”

Phil bit his tongue, another tear rolling down his face now.

“It isn’t your fault.”

Techno looked as if he didn’t believe it. Phil stepped away and took Techno’s arm, taking the scissors in his own hand before leading his son over to the couch and making him sit. He began to fix Techno’s hair, humming something sadly as he snipped away at the uneven trim. Techno didn’t object. He sat there quietly, staring at his trembling hands clasped together in his lap.

When Phil had finished, and Techno’s hair was cut neater, they both collected what was left of his pink mane and brought it outside. They burned it in a hastily lit fire, and when that was done, they collected the ashes and brought it to the whirlpool where Tommy had met his fate and let the soot be swept away into the water.

Chapter End Notes

Sorry this is such a short chapter! I actually wanted to have this happen before they went to L’manburg to share the news of Tommy’s death but i completely forgot!

Last pov from Technoblade for now. Next we will be getting to tommy :)

Home At The Far Side of the Universe

Chapter Summary

everything tommy says to Clementine is in Ender, unless it is italicized, in which case it is english

// dream of drowning, mention of death, mention of abuse

yes, the title is from the end poem :)

Days passed quickly in The End. Tommy was starting to lose track of just how long he'd been there. Not that he cared too much about it, but if he had to guess, it had been a month since he found Clementine, and made his home here in The End. And he was happy. There wasn't really a way to tell time here, so Tommy slept when he was tired, and explored when he wasn't. He had gotten better at speaking Ender, reading through the translation journal for hours and using context clues to find the meanings of words he didn't recognize. At this point, he almost only spoke Ender, only slipping up on words he didn't know well enough yet. Words he couldn't find, he made up his own words for.

The very first night (what he guessed was night) since finding Clementine, he slept in the room at the center of the end city. He got maybe an hour of sleep before waking up in a sweat, his lungs feeling as if they were full of water and his heart wrenching painfully. A dream. He'd actually dreamed for the first time in months. He dreamed that he was hanging at the edge of a cliff, reaching for his friends, calling to them and begging for their help but they weren't reaching back. They turned away, disappearing into an empty white void. He slipped and he fell, staring up as the sky grew further away. No one was there to save him. No one would catch him. He hit the water with an echoing splash and began to sink, the water closing in around him.

Unable to fall back asleep, he'd wandered outside, calling up to Clementine. The dragon had been asleep on the roof, but now she woke up, gazing down at Tommy with concern.

"Can't sleep" the teen muttered, the enderspeak coming to him almost fluently. The dragon crooned softly before reaching down and picking Tommy up off the bridge by the collar of his shirt. She set the boy at her side and draped one giant wing across him, nuzzling the boy before laying her head down beside him, drifting off to sleep again. For a while Tommy sat there in stunned silence, the rapid beating of his heart that had come from the dragon being so close slowing. He looked over at Clementine, his heart squeezing with warmth, before laying his head on top of hers, both of them asleep now.

He'd slept beside her since.

He had the dream again almost every night, but now it ended differently. Instead of falling into the sea and drowning, alone and cold and afraid, Clementine caught him, wrapping her wings around him, keeping him *safe*

Two months.

“*Damn*, there really is nothing down there, huh?” Tommy retorted, looking down at the empty abyss below them. Clementine trilled softly, confirming. He leaned over the edge of the grassy island, staring with distaste at the drop.

They’d been exploring for a little bit, Clementine showing Tommy around her world. He probably should’ve been asleep, but he found he couldn’t, so instead Clementine had picked him up by the collar of his shirt and flown off with the boy, grumbling with amusement at the boy’s startled shouts.

“So you’re telling me it’s just-ah-!”

The ground beneath him gave out, and he began tumbling downwards.

He heard the dragon cry out with distress. Tommy gasped, clawing at the air.

“Clementine-!”

But nothing happened. No one grabbed him by the coat. Nothing saved him. He was falling, and looking at the empty abyss below him, black like a deep, endless sea, he guessed he was going to be for awhile.

This was it then. Tommy squeezed his eyes shut, holding his arms to his chest and clawing at his shirt.

He collided with something solid with a thud, the impact knocking the air from his chest. He gasped, pushing himself upward to see what he’d hit.

He was on the back of the dragon. She cooed back at him, looking over her shoulder at the teen with concern. Her wings beat powerfully against the sky, throwing them through the air. The wind pulled at Tommy’s hair, making his eyes burn. He couldn’t help the small smile that crept onto his face, pushing away the fear he’d felt seconds ago.

“Holy- holy *shit*!! I’m- I’m flying! We’re flying!” He giggled

The dragon sighed in relief, watching Tommy amusedly.

“Yeah I know, I’ve flown before, but you were carrying me then! This is so much cooler!” He laughed excitedly, sitting up and looking at the blurred world under them. Another bubbly laugh came from the boy as he raised his arms, taking in the feeling of the wind against him and whooping. His voice echoed against the endless sky. It felt like freedom.

It was freedom.

The dragon roared loudly, her voice shaking the sky. Both of their voices echoed together, sounding as one.

From then on they moved around like that, and no matter how many times he slipped or jumped around or dove off her back playfully, she always caught him.

One year.

Tommy was lying on his back in the grass, staring up at the night sky.

“You know, Mrs. Clementine,” Tommy smiled, eyes still focused on the empty abyss above him. The dragon beside him stirred, looking at Tommy quietly. She scooted closer to him. “I think I figured out what else this place needs.” the teen laid his head back, leaning against the creature behind him.

The dragon purred, her smile full of amusement.

more? You’ve already told me dozens of things The End needs her eyes seemed to say.

The list went on. He’d told her The End needed winter, then fall, then summer, then spring. He told her it needed cows, music, instruments, and fireflies. He told Clementine about forks and birds, cozy sweaters and swords, hot cocoa and bees---anything he could think of.

“Well it’s true!” He laughed, shoving her away lightly. He turned back to the sky, grinning fondly.

“Personally, I think it’d be nice to have some *stars*”

The dragon crooned curiously, the word unfamiliar to her.

“You’ve never heard of *stars*?” Tommy gasped, his mouth open in shock. “You are missing out, Clementine,” the teen laughed, putting his arms behind his head and scooting closer to the dragon. She nudged him softly. It seemed she liked to hear Tommy talk, about anything really.

tell me more her soft gaze said.

“Well, they’re these bright, beautiful little dots that sit in the sky. They’re incredible, just sitting there, not a care in the world. Doesn’t that sound lovely, Mrs Clementine?”

The dragon growled warmly, blinking slowly as if to say *it does*. Tommy sighed.

“I think it would be cool to be a *star*. You don’t have to worry about much when you’re up there. All you’ve got to do is sit there and sparkle. And you make a lot of people happy! I know *stars* make me happy. And my family too! I used to spend hours sitting with them, laying in our backyard looking at the sky. I mostly did it with Wilbur, but sometimes Phil would join us. Even Techno did a few times!” Tommy giggled lightly, “He didn’t come out alot, but I know he really did like *stargazing*. He and Wilbur always helped me try to learn

the *constellations*, but I could just never get it right,” Tommy chuckled, letting out a content sigh.

For a moment they sat in that comfortable silence. Clementine was watching the sky, as if she was just realizing now that it was empty. She hummed softly.

Tommy looked down at his lap, the small smile on his lips slipping away slowly.

“I miss them, Clementine...” the teen said quietly.

The dragon beside him hummed with soft concern, turning to face Tommy.

“I know-...I know I shouldn’t but I do...I don’t just miss- the overworld. I miss- I miss- what we used to have.

I want to sing with Wilbur, and listen to Techno tell his stories. Ender, what I would give to just hug Phil again- and- and Tubbo. Gods, I miss Tubbo” He could feel tears building up, his heart sinking. He pulled his legs closer to his chest, laying his chin on his knees.

“I thought maybe-....maybe it wouldn’t hurt as much. They don’t really care about me anymore, right? So why? Why does it hurt so much?” Tommy could feel tears running down his face now. He wiped them with his sleeve uselessly, taking in a shuddering breath.

Clementine nudged Tommy with her head, resting her chin in his lap. She pulled herself around the boy, cradling him close to her side. Tommy began to cry, laying against the dragon as sobs tore through his chest. His whining echoed against the void, falling back on his own ears. It felt so lonely. The dragon hummed softly, wrapping herself around Tommy. He cried against her, hugging the dragon back.

“It is okay to hurt, Tommy” a distant voice said, echoing in Tommy’s mind as he cried. Her voice was soft, calm.... Familiar. He’d heard it in the final control room, in the duel, in the stronghold. “Things will be better now that you are here. You are safe with Clementine.”

“Okay,” Tommy sniffled, nodding shakily and wiping away tears. He leaned against Clementine as the dragon wrapped her tail around the teen, crooning gently. “Okay.”

It could have been his imagination. It had to be. But for a moment he thought he felt a comforting hand on his head, running their fingers through his hair. He fell asleep soon after that, surrounded by the dragon and the other voice.

Two years.

Tommy screamed loudly, ducking into one of the city’s buildings to avoid the creature outside hunting him. He could hear the beast outside, growling as a low rattle filled the air. He could hear his heartbeat pounding in his ears as he struggled to catch his breath. Something outside scratched the wall. He dropped to the floor and peaked out the window.

The dragon was hanging onto the building beside the one he was in, growling as she crawled down the wall. She slunk slowly across the bricks, looking around with sharp eyes. She hissed quietly, searching for the boy.

Tommy squeaked as their eyes met. The teen ducked below the window, holding his breath. He waited for a few seconds before checking again, slowly sitting up and setting one hand on the window ledge. He peered over the wall

“Huh?” He frowned, standing up. The dragon had disappeared completely, gone without a trace. He leaned out the window, looking around confusedly.

The dragon reappeared, her face only inches away from Tommy’s as she dropped down from the roof, hanging upside down in front of him.

The teen yelped before stumbling backward and tripping over his feet, falling to the ground with a thud. Clementine crooned worriedly, dropping from her spot on the roof and sniffing the boy currently laying on the floor.

Tommy began laughing. He sat up, his shoulders shaking as he cackled loudly.

“Okay! Fine! I’m fine! This isn’t fair though, y’know. You can smell better than me. I’d like to see you try to hide again.”

Clementine huffed playfully, turning and scaling the wall. Tommy walked out onto the bridge where Clementine was waiting for him, her tail flicking back and forth happily.

“Let’s see it then!” Tommy called, setting his hands on his hips. “How do you expect to hide?”

The dragon watched him closely. She began slowly opening her wings.

“Clementine. Don’t do it.” Tommy said accusingly, pointing at the dragon.

She lowered herself to the ground, wings flared above her.

“Cleme- No! Clementine!” Tommy rushed forward across the bridge, grappling onto the dragon as she shot into the air. He swung onto her back as she rose into the sky, roaring with amusement.

“I told you that’s not fair! I can’t fly!” he shouted, hanging tightly to the dragon.

Today, like most days, they were playing hide and seek. Currently the score was 7 to....something. It was a big number. The few wins Tommy had were earned cleverly and fairly, totally not because the dragon had let him win. Those were only on days Clementine was feeling particularly nice. Tommy had come to learn that she was surprisingly insanely competitive.

Tommy turned over, laying on his back as the dragon continued flying.

“Sooo Mrs. Clementine! Where are we going now?”

The dragon crooned something back.

“Alright then!”

A few minutes of happy chatting and playful flying later, the dragon growled lightly, her way of letting Tommy they were close to their destination.

Tommy sat up, leaning over to see where Clementine had brought them now.

He gasped.

In front of them lay an island of brightly glowing crystals. The minerals radiated light and reflected all kinds of color, a wave of rainbow slinking across the shiny surface. Many of the pillars of gems stretched high into the air, at least 100 blocks high. It almost looked like the silhouette of a city, the way the crystals were packed tightly together. The way the sparkled, colors dancing across their smooth surface, reminded Tommy of the northern lights.

Tommy laughed, his eyes bright and full of wonder.

“HOLY *SHIT!* This is so *fucking* cool!”

The dragon trilled something happily, smiling with pride for her home.

“Heeey, why didn’t you show me this before?” Tommy crossed his arms, playfully teasing Clementine. The dragon hummed in amusement before diving down, quickly headed toward the crystal plain. Tommy instinctively wrapped his hands around the dragon’s neck, but he knew she wouldn’t let him fall anyway.

She whizzed between the colorful pillars, diving and making sharp turns between the crystal city. Tommy hollered excitedly, raising his arms in the air as Clementine veered through the towering jewel columns.

She angled her wings to fly just beside a huge crystal. Tommy reached out, running his hand along the cold, smooth surface of the gem. It was like magic.

Clementine flew a bit faster and began circling a part of the island where there were no crystals, only the white endstone of the island. Before she could land Tommy had slid off her back, landing on the ground. He had a bit of a scrape on his knee now but it didn’t bother him. He ran forward to one of the pillars, looking at his reflection in the glass.

He looked older, his fluffy hair a brighter shade of blonde that curled around his ears, his eyes bluer than they’d ever been. He was earning a small stubble on his face. He’d gotten a lot taller than when he’d first come here as well.

Tommy smiled at himself, proud of his reflection.

He lowered himself to his knees, breaking off one of the crystals from the side of the pillar. He rushed over to Clementine, showing off the glowing gem with pride.

“Look! This is so cool!”

Clementine nodded approvingly, crooning happily.

four years.

Tommy was losing track of how long he'd been waiting in that tree. It had been a few hours at least. Clementine had left a while ago after flying him to this tree and then quickly running off. He got the message though, that being he was supposed to stay. It happened quite often. Clementine would leave in a hurry, flying off in the same direction each time.

The first time it happened Tommy had been worried. Clementine had insisted through sad croons and reassuring purrs that she would come back. Even though he trusted her with his whole heart, you can't blame Tommy for worrying about being left alone. Most people in his life had left him. Fortunately or not, he found out that a small part of him was beginning to forgive them more and more.

Clementine however had returned each and every time, cuddling Tommy close to her with her wings and purring apologies. He wasn't worried about her leaving him anymore.

Tommy was slumped against the giant tree, staring blankly at the sky. He held a chorus fruit in his hand. He threw it into the air lazily before catching it and biting into the fruit. He shut his eyes as the world grew fuzzy, and when he opened them again he was on a different part of the tree branch. He didn't understand how the strange fruit made him teleport, but it was fun, so who cares?

Ender, He was bored.

He had been keeping a journal for awhile, made from an empty book he found stuffed under a few more shirts in the dresser in his room. Sometimes he would draw in it. The doodles weren't very good but they made Tommy happy. Most of the book was full of words, some sentences in Ender and others in english, though he mostly stuck to Ender. A few of the pages were written in an off combination of English and Ender when he felt like writing it that way. He wrote whatever came to his mind, though most things he told directly to Clementine afterward.

Tommy sat up slowly before standing up and walking across the thick tree branch he'd been resting on, over to his bag. He picked it up hastily, swinging it over his shoulder. Something fell from the bag, hitting the branch beneath him with a dull thud and careening down to the ground. With a worried gasp Tommy swung beneath the tree branch, holding onto it with one arm, and grabbed the object quickly out of the air. He sighed in relief before climbing back up onto the tree limb.

Tommy was a natural at climbing now. He spent most days in the woods with Clementine learning how the dragon moved around without using her wings. She made it look so simple.

Once Tommy was steadily sitting atop the tree branch again, he looked at the object that had fallen from his bag.

He froze, inhaling sharply.

In his hands sat the communicator he'd found in the end city. He hadn't touched it since that day, too afraid to see what people had been saying to him. He was supposed to be leaving them behind.

Were they mad at him for running off? Where did they think he went? Did they miss him? Did they hate him? More than they already had?

He didn't want to know.

It had been in the bag for all that time, but he'd only just remembered it now.

The teen swallowed hard. Against his better judgement, he reached forward and pressed the button. A few seconds passed before the device flickered to life, yet again showing the list of names. He clicked on his own before pulling his knees to his chest, laying his head on his legs as the communicator screen filled with messages. It beeped rapidly as it filled in Tommy on every sentence he'd ignored, the buzzing becoming an annoying drone in his head.

After what felt like minutes of avoiding the device, the buzzing that came with each message stopped. Tommy glanced up slowly.

The last message was from 4 years ago. He clicked a random button on the device before he could see what it said, but he unfortunately glimpsed the name.

Tubbo.

He exhaled loudly, the weight of how long ago it had been sent crashing down on him. Four years. Four fucking years. Had it really been that long since he'd seen Tubbo? Since he'd been with his friends? Since he'd met Ranboo? It must've been even longer since-

He winced at the realization, tilting his head back to fight the tears that came with it. Wilbur had died only a few months before he'd been exiled.

Had it actually been four years since Wilbur had died? Since he'd betrayed Technoblade? Since he'd truly lost Phil?

By the way he was struggling to remember their faces, he'd thought it had been longer.

After a few minutes of counting his breaths and grounding himself, he looked back at the communicator to see what button he'd blindly pressed while trying to get away from Tubbo's message.

It was another list, this time showing a selection of people Tommy could privately message instead of just seeing everyone's messages to him at once.

At the same time he felt a weight lift from his shoulders, his heart squeezed in pain.

He could message them. He could tell them he was okay.

But should he?

For a while Tommy stared at the many names, going through the list of things he could say to each of them in his head. but everytime he thought of something, he reminded himself that he was supposed to be gone. He reminded himself that they likely hated him.

Lately, he'd been noticing a new voice in his head. It sounded like him, the way it spoke and laughed and jokingly whispered all the things he should do. Sometimes it spoke roughly, shouting at Tommy whenever he told himself that he was hated by his friends and family, or that leaving was the best decision he'd made.

It sounded a lot like himself before...*everything*.

This time Tommy was loud, demanding, so sure of himself.

“Dream lied to you!”

Tommy looked up.

He'd been starting to realize that too.

But he couldn't just tell them, could he? They'd still be mad that he left, even if Dream really had been lying about them all hating him.

Tommy wanted to believe Dream had been lying. He did believe it.
Right?

He scrolled through the list again, biting his tongue. He knew he wasn't going to, but just the thought of speaking to any of his friends made him giddy. It made him feel like he was back at the start of L'manburg again, his friends at his side. The world in his hands. Like no matter what happened they would be okay.

He couldn't tell them though.

As he thumbed through the list yet again, his eyes caught on a name.

Drista.

Dream's sister that had visited him a few times in L'manburg, then again once in exile. How Dream came to be the brother of a literal demigod, Tommy couldn't quite fathom. She was younger than Tommy, but the sense of humour she had was—quite impressive, which is alot coming from him. When she'd found him in exile, it seemed as if she had truly felt bad for him, not that he wanted her pity, but he did appreciate the way she kept Dream away from them for the small amount of time she was there. She told Tommy to message her if she

needed him. Tommy didn't have the heart to tell the girl that he no longer had his communicator.

His finger hovered over the name before he quickly pressed it, watching as the chat box appeared.

Was he really going to do this? Was he going to break his silence after being gone from the grid for *four years*? Could he actually just talk to someone? Just like that?

Would she even care that much?

He hesitated for a moment more before pulling the screen closer to himself and typing away. He pondered over what to say to her forever. The amount of time it took to type the message was not at all worth what it said.

Tommyinnit: Hello.

Tommy sat back, exhaling slowly. He couldn't go back from this. He'd messaged someone after being gone for four *fucking* years.

For a few minutes nothing happened. The message hung on the screen desolately.

Three dots appeared next to Drista's name.

Drista: who is this

Tommy sucked in a shaky breath before typing again.

Tommyinnit: it's tommy

There were a few seconds of silence. Drista's name had three dots next to it for an ungodly amount of time before anything happened.

Drista: that's not fucking funny. Who is this.

Tommy sighed.

Tommyinnit: it's me i swear. You visited me in logstedshire. You threatened to stab dream with a fork.

He snorted lightly as he typed the last sentence. Another minute passed.

Drista: tommy? Is it really you?

Drista: answer me.

The device in his hand began to ping with a high pitched ringing. Drista's name appeared on the screen in big letters beside the words "answer" and "hang up".

Tommy hadn't spoken to another—...another *person* in years. Did he even know how to speak english correctly anymore?

He ignored the temptation to set the device down. To throw it off the island and never think about it again.

He pressed answer and held the device up this ear.

For a moment neither of them spoke. Tommy cleared his throat, speaking english for the first time in a while.

“Uh...hi”

There was a sharp gasp on the other end of the call.

“Holy shit. It’s actually you.” Drista said, her voice coated in disbelief. Tommy exhaled amusedly.

“Yeah..it’s-it’s me.”

The call was filled with an awkward silence for a moment before Drista spoke again.

“ It’s actually you! Jesus Christ you sound old!”

Tommy snorted startledly and began to cackle, that loud, vibrant laugh he hadn’t gotten to use on another person in forever.

“C’mon! I’m not that old!”

“You sound like you’re philza’s age!”

They both laughed now, the device crackling with the static.

Drista was mumbling to herself rapidly as if she still couldn’t believe that she was actually speaking to *Tommy*

“What the fuck?! How are- where the hell are you?”

Tommy bit his tongue.

“Well...I can’t tell you. I’m sorry.”

“Why not?!” Drista shouted angrily. Tommy scowled sadly.

“I don’t even know if you could get to me. I think it’s best no one knows, okay?”

“What, are you dead? Cause everyone thinks you’re dead, y’know.”

Tommy stopped.

“They think I’m dead?”

“We all did! I was told you drowned, Tommy!”

He hummed.

“I—I guess I can see why they’d think that.”

“Oh my god just- Wait till everyone hears you're alive Tommy!”

Tommy stopped again, an unnecessary dread knotting in his chest, before speaking in a rushed, desperate tone.

“No! Please Drista just—don’t tell them. Please.”

“What the hell? Why? Tommy they- everyone misses you!”

“They-they miss me?”

There was a sharp laugh on the other side of the call.

“Of course they do! Why wouldn’t they?”

Tommy was silent for a moment. He sighed gently.

“...you remember exile, right? Well, while I was there...Dream...he told me alot of shit like-like that everyone hated me.” The words felt wrong on his tongue.

Drista remained quiet for a split second. She inhaled roughly, her voice laced with dull venom.

“Well, you don’t have to worry about him anymore. He’s gone.” She sounded sad, angry, bitter.

“Gone?” Tommy asked breathlessly, hope fluttering in his chest.

“Well. He’s not...dead. But he ran off around the time we learned you’d ‘died’. No one has seen him since.”

Tommy sank down in his spot against the tree.

Then he sat up quickly. On the horizon he could hear the beating of wings.

“I’m sorry Drista I- I have to go-“

Drista scoffed

“What?! But- Tommy, wait! Where are you going? Where even are you?”

“I can’t tell you that. I’m sorry but I *can’t*.” He begged to the device, his heart wrenching.

“Then just tell me that you’re safe!”

Tommy sucked in a breath. He smiled thinly.

“I’m safe. I promise.”

“Will you ever come back?”

“...Maybe one day. I-...I don’t know. I haven’t really been around anyone in-“ he chuckled stiffly, “-four years.”

“Please do Tommy. I don’t know what happened but... They miss you. We all do.”

He swallowed.

“Okay.” was all the teen replied. He could hear the dragon getting closer, the sound of her wings beating against the sky growing louder.

“Drista. Promise me this. Promise me that you won’t tell anyone I’m alive”

“I don’t understand why!”

“It’s better that they don’t- o-okay? I just—...I just need a little bit longer.”

Drista was silent for a long time, silence ringing out between them as Clementine drew nearer.

“Okay. I won’t. Promise”

Tommy sighed in relief.

“Thank you Drista. I have to go now. Thank you for talking to me.”

“Will we talk again?”

“Not right now. I don’t think it will be soon but... we will.”

“Okay....Goodbye Tommy.”

“Goodbye Drista. Thank you”

He ended the call, letting out a breath he didn’t know he’d been holding. He could see Clementine in the distance, coming from the same direction she’d flown off in earlier. Tommy exited the chat, looking down at the device one final time. He caught onto another name.

Wilbur. He’d messaged the man once after his brother had died. It was nothing long, nothing special. Just a short message, simply saying hi. He had known it wasn’t going to work, but seeing the words “undelivered” next to the message still made his heart sink.

He opened the chat.

Tommy didn’t think he was going to get on the communicator again, not for a while. It had taken *a lot* out of him just talking to Drista for a few minutes. Anything he was going to say, even if no one would be around to hear it, he was going to say now.

He sent the message.

“I’m sorry.”

Tommy turned the device off quickly just as Clementine landed on the island. He didn’t think he could take seeing the message go unread again. He shoved it into his bag and slid down

the tree before turning and running over to Clementine. The dragon crooned happily, leaning down. Tommy climbed onto her back quickly.

He didn't see the message again.

He never read the words next to it.

[message delivered]

Free The End.

Chapter Summary

warnings
mention of panic attacks

past abuse implied

character death

I just want to say I'm sorry

Chapter Notes

Really sorry.

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Five years.

Tommy set the coat he'd been working on sewing down on the grass at his feet with a sigh. The needle he'd made himself, crafted of a strong crystal from the jewel island and thinned against hard stones. It broke upon his multiple first crafting attempts but he finally got one of the jewels to work without shattering. The string had been harder to make, but he managed to find a neat medium of plants and cloth from his old clothes. Currently he was wearing another set of clothes he'd already finished sewing together with another, and was now working on the final outfit. He'd noticed his clothes had been feeling smaller lately, so he'd set about fixing them. He didn't really need shoes too urgently at the moment, but he was working on crafting some from the crystals on the island.

He groaned, glancing over at Clementine. The dragon was sleeping a few feet away, snoring quietly. Tommy pulled himself to his feet and walked over to Clementine. He poked the dragon's face.

"Clementiiiiine. I'm bored." He whined.

The dragon opened one bleary eye and looked at Tommy tiredly. She exhaled loudly and rolled onto her side, turning away from Tommy. The boy scoffed, smiling playfully before poking the dragon again--several more times.

“Come on, Clementine! Let’s go do something! All you do nowadays is sleep! Let’s play a game or- or go exploring! We could check on the chorus fruit farm, or go swim in the ponds. Oh! You know where we haven’t been in awhile? The crystal island!”

Clementine hummed amusedly as if to say *we went there a few days ago*.

He giggled.

“I know I know, but you get the point!” He grabbed the tired dragon by the wing and began pulling her until she stood up. “Come on! Up up up! let’s go!” Clementine pushed herself up with a tired growl. For a moment she stood still, looking out at the endless void, before she blinked softly and leaned her head down. Tommy climbed onto the dragon’s back, bouncing up and down excitedly.

The dragon took to the sky with a forced huff, her voice sounding strained. Tommy frowned.

“Are-Are you okay Clem?” He asked with concern, climbing forward to look her in the eyes. The dragon crooned lightly, nodding. Tommy smiled, laying down just on top of Clementine’s head. He inhaled deeply, patting the dragon as they flew

If he wasn’t Tommy, he might’ve run out of things to talk about by now, but he was, so the man was blabbering the entire time, pointing at islands as they passed and reflecting on their adventures there. Clementine listened happily. She remembered every moment they’d had together, but she still liked to listen to her boy talk.

“—And that’s where I got stung by a jellyfish a few weeks ago! It didn’t hurt though, he was just a bastard!” Tommy cackled. Clementine hummed deeply.

The boy gasped suddenly.

“Ya know, Clementine! I think it might be my *birthday* soon!” His face lit up as he shouted the words excitedly. “I don’t really know what day it is, but it’s gotta be soon, right? I’ll be—what?—21? *Damn!* That’s a big milestone! I’m gonna be a big- well- bigger man! The biggest of men!”

Tommy was older now, much older than when he first came here. His hair was longer and fluffier. His golden blonde locks curled around his ears, just past his neck. His eyes were now a gleaming blue, brighter than stars, brighter than the blue of the overworld’s sky. He almost looked young again, the dark circles gone from his eyes, his scars barely visible, his shoulders no longer hunched nervously.

He’d *healed*. He no longer flinched at loud noises or sudden movements from Clementine. Not only that, but when he thought of his past and the people in it, he no longer fell into panic attacks. He hadn’t cried in years because he hadn’t felt the need to.

He knew the people in the overworld weren’t innocent, not at all. But most of them had been pressured into the terrible things they did. Years passed and people changed.

He still missed them of course. Those people were his friends. His family. But it was okay, because he had hope that all of them had moved on by now.

He'd forgiven them.

There was only one person Tommy hated. A name he didn't think about much anymore when years ago he would've fallen into disarray at just that.

But he didn't need to think of that man anymore. He couldn't harm Tommy. Tommy was safe.

The dragon hummed thoughtfully. She wasn't really sure what a *birthday* was, but if Tommy was excited about it, she was too.

"Hey Clem, how old are you?" Tommy asked, raising one eyebrow curiously. She answered with a gentle huff.

A few minutes passed as they flew on. Tommy looked down, realizing with a strange hum that he didn't recognize where they were, the surrounding islands appearing unfamiliar.

"Hey Clementine, where are we going exactly?"

The dragon purred something to him kindly.

Tommy gasped, his face lighting up. "Is it someplace new? I hope it is! That would be so cool! I'll think of it as- as an early birthday present. You still have to get me more stuff tho" the man chuckled.

The dragon made a soft sound that mimicked laughter before crooning gently, the noise she made one Tommy had come to recognize as meaning "sleep." He pondered it for a moment, his brows furrowed in thought, before crossing his arms. "Nah, don't think I will. You're stuck with me, Mrs!"

The dragon whimpered in mock annoyance, grinning playfully with a thoughtful shake of her head. She didn't seem to mind as Tommy continued with his stories, trying to guess what awaited them in the new place Clementine was bringing them to.

They flew on, Tommy babbling most of the way. Clementine hummed sadly.

—

an hour later.

He wasn't sure when he'd fallen asleep. It was likely only a few minutes ago. He was awoken by Clementine, the dragon purring deeply to signal to Tommy they were close to their destination. Tommy sat up quickly, practically clambering onto Clementine's head with a wide grin. He gasped.

Before them, a huge island came into view, appearing out of the void. The island was surrounded by several smaller ones dotted around in the sky. It was bigger than any of those Tommy had ever seen, the endstone stretching out in a giant circle. Around the edges of the island were dozens of huge pillars, stretching into the sky so high they seemed to disappear into the dark void. The columns were made of smooth, purple and black obsidian, the iridescent rock cracked and worn by time. The place was old, older than Tommy. Around the bases of the colorful towers were fallen pieces of the pillars that had broken away under the weight of years passing. Atop each of the towers sat dimly glowing orbs, shining with different hues of pink and violet. The surrounding islands were completely empty, with no plants or strange cities or crystals to their name, unlike most of the other islands they'd encountered

Clementine landed on the edge of the endstone island with a grunt before leaning her head down to the stone floor. Tommy slid from her back slowly, tilting his head up to stare in wonder at the enormous pillars of obsidian. They were arranged in a ring around the center of the island. In the very middle stood a strange structure, colored with shades of black and grey

Tommy exhaled softly, spinning in a slow circle as he walked toward the center.

"Holy *shit*. What- what is this place?" He asked breathlessly, staring up at the tall columns that towered over both of them. The dragon hummed lightly, stepping behind Tommy and lightly nudging him forward with her head. He walked with Clementine toward the center of the island, gazing at the ring of towers in awed silence.

Tommy looked down and stopped walking a few feet away from the odd shape in the very middle of the island.

It was huge, as big as Clementine even. Several dead, grey and decaying sticks lay in a circle, surrounded by ash colored branches and black vines and dull gems. It was coated in black, grey, and white leaves, the likes of which Tommy had never seen in either of his worlds. Black obsidian and dark rocks held the sticks and leaves in place.

It was a nest.

And in the middle of that nest was an egg.

It was the color of the night sky, reflecting bright colors of shimmering purple and pink around its scaly surface. It was bigger than any normal eggs, maybe two times the size of Tommy's hand. It sat comfortably amid the plants, surrounded by the comfortable nest.

"Woah..." Tommy gasped breathlessly, stepping forward. He looked at Clementine for confirmation before slowly stepping into the nest, careful not to break it in any way. He sat down next to the egg, his hand hovering just above it. Clementine smiled and nodded her head softly, stepping into the nest and laying down beside Tommy. The boy pulled the egg into his lap. The scaled surface was cold, but not uncomfortably so, more like the slight chill of the rainbow crystals on the island. It seemed to glow with a soft light that pulsed gently.

"Is- Is this yours Clementine?" He asked, a smile creeping onto his face. The dragon hummed in reply. Tommy giggled, staring at the egg with warm pride growing in his chest.

“You’re a mom! Oh congratulations!”

Clementine hummed softly, looking down at Tommy with a soft smile. She scooted closer to the boy, gazing down at the egg. She watched Tommy silently as he rattled on, shaking with excitement.

“—this must be where you went when you’d fly off! Oh Clementine I- I’m so happy for you! Are they gonna hatch soon? Is that why you brought me here?”

The dragon hummed deeply, the small smile on her face falling. She curled herself around Tommy, pulling the boy against her side with her wing. She draped it over the boy, looking into his eyes with a solemn croon. She blinked at him tiredly.

“Oh- are you tired? I bet you are, that was a long fly! You can take a nap if you want, I’ll watch your egg, okay?”

Clementine blinked at him thankfully before laying her head down beside Tommy. She nuzzled him gently with a low purr before humming again, a deep rumble coming from her chest as she exhaled. She closed her eyes with a deep breath.

Tommy smiled warmly and laid back against Clementine, looking thoughtfully at the egg in his lap. He wrapped his arms around it, pulling the object into a hug. He looked out at the island, a calm presence settling over him as he leaned into the slow rise and fall of Clementine's breath. He’d never met the dragon inside the egg and he already considered them as his sibling.

This was his family.

Minutes passed, just the three of them sitting there. The world was peaceful.

The usual hum that came from the starless void of the sky faded away, alongside the gentle sound of Clementine breathing. The crystals atop the obsidian tower dimmed as the dragon went still.

Tommy didn’t notice at first, until the silence around him came falling down around him. The world had never been truly silent here. There was always some kind of sound. But now it was deafeningly quiet. He swallowed worriedly.

“Clementine?”

The dragon didn’t answer. She lay still, her eyes shut peacefully. Tommy frowned and moved the egg out of his lap, setting it down carefully against the edge of the nest. He kneeled beside Clementine, poking the dragon once. When nothing happened, he set his hand on her side and shook her gently.

“Hey—Clementine?” He nudged her softly, looking at the dragon with concern.

She didn’t stir.

Tommy choked on his breath as hollow dread sunk in his chest. He shook her roughly, his hands beginning to tremble as he shoved the dragon's shoulder.

"Clem! Clem, c'mon get up! This isn't-it's not funny!" He begged, desperation clawing at his heart as painful tears began sliding down his face.

Clementine never woke. She was silent, still, peaceful.

Lifeless.

Tommy choked on a sob and began trying to lift the dragon's head up, hot tears spilling from his eyes. He could feel himself beginning to panic. His ears were filled with a dull ringing and his thoughts grew muddled and discoordinated.

"No! No! You have to get up! You still- you still have to meet Tubbo! And Ranboo! Gh-Ghostbur would love you! He would, I promise! They all would! You and- and Phil could take us all flying! You could watch me and Techno spar! We can do anything you want! But you have to get up!" He begged, promising anything he could think of just to get the dragon to come back.

She didn't wake up.

He sobbed, laying down on her head and hugging the dragon close to him. His tears fell onto the dragon's scales as he clutched the dragon against his chest.

"I still have to show you the *stars*." He hiccuped, pulling the dragon's forehead against his own. He gazed at her eyes, shut softly to never be opened again. He told himself they would open any second, and she would hum amusedly because this was all some prank, right? He would see her soft, amethyst eyes again, and they'd fly home with the egg. When it hatched they'd play with the little dragon and spend time together. They'd play games! They'd teach him to fly-- and how to understand ender--and-and---..

He knew he was lying to himself. She would've respawned by now if she was coming back. He laid against the dragon, cradling the beast close to him.

"Please Clementine. Please don't leave me alone." He said quietly, wrapping his arms around her weakly.

"Tommy?"

He whipped his head around, startled by the new, familiar voice.

It was the same voice he'd heard in the final control room and then again in the duel for L'manberg. The gentle hum he'd heard inside the stronghold when he'd thought himself to be alone. It brought across him a strange comfort, slightly easing the painful dread in his chest.

Behind him stood a tall woman with raven black hair that flowed softly, shimmering with light. She wore an elegant purple gown with a lavender colored silk scarf wrapped around her arms. A black sun hat with a black lace veil covered her face, darkening her features. Despite the veil, her bright, gentle amethyst eyes stood out vibrantly. Hanging from her ear was a

golden chain with a single sparkling emerald attached to it. On her back sat two obsidian colored wings, sparkling with hues of blue, green, and purple. She had a soft smile on her face as she gazed at the boy.

“Who-Who are you-?” Tommy choked out, pulling Clementine closer to himself protectively.

The woman bowed her head to Tommy before she stepped forward carefully, slowly so as to not seem threatening.

“My name is Kristin, and I’ve come to thank you.”

Tommy sniffled, staring quizzically at the lady.

“H-huh?”

She smiled sadly, coming to sit just beside the nest. Tommy scooted away from her, still clinging to the dragon.

“I am called The Goddess of Death. You see, Clementine here, she is my creation, and this is her home.

Clementine was alone for a long time, Tommy. That is until you came along.” Kristin reached out, taking Tommy’s hand carefully with a familiar gentleness. Tommy stared at her, tears falling down his face. He looked at the dragon, hiccuping with another cry.

“She was alone-? For- for how long-?”

Kristin sighed softly. When she spoke again, her voice was solemn and quiet.

“For many years.... She wasn’t always alone though. She once had a mate and a colony of hybrids that worshipped her. But overtime, overworlders found the end and began seeking control of the dragons. But what they could not tame, they destroyed.

They killed her mate as he was defending their egg, as he was less powerful than her. By the time she had gotten to the scene, every human there was dead, alongside her mate. The overworlders, once respawned in their world, warned everyone not to go there, and soon as years passed The End became forgotten.

Eventually the hybrids that lived here died out too, and she and her egg were left alone....

But then you came Tommy,” Kristin smiled, looking at Tommy with warm, thankful eyes as she held his hand in her own, “You saved her from that loneliness and gave her company. She saw you as her son, as one of her own.”

Tommy smiled sadly, cradling Clementine’s head against his chest.

“She’s-she’s my family. She’s helped me so much.”

Kristin’s expression softened.

“I know Tommy. And she thanks you for that. But now it is time to let her go.”

Tommy winced. He knew. He knew that she was gone already, but hearing it still dug like knives into his heart. More tears spilled down his face. He let go of Kristen’s hand, staring at

the woman with eyes full of bitter sadness.

“But- You- You said you’re the Goddess of Death!” He shouted, his face contorted in agony as he pleaded with the angel. “Can’t you do something?!”

Kristin shook her head sadly.

“I am sorry Tommy, but I do not control death, I simply bring those that have passed to peace. Clementine is old, and her time in this world has come to an end. But you mustn't worry for her. She has a family to stay with her as she goes. She knows it’s her time, and she is okay with that.”

Tommy choked back another cry, clenching his teeth as he leaned into Clementine.

“I thought she would’ve had more lives...y’know..three, like everyone else.”

“She did once,” The goddess sighed, “but she lost them to a terrible man while defending her egg. Thankfully her last life she got to cherish with you.”

Tommy bit back a sob, more teardrops falling onto the dragon’s scales. The man hugged the dragon closer. For a moment They waited in silence until Tommy looked up, his eyes red and glossy with tears.

“But...what am I supposed to do? I- she’s all I’ve had, Kristin.”

The goddess smiled at him warmly. She looked away from Tommy, and the boy followed her gaze. His eyes fell onto the egg, sitting alone beside him.

“Well, Clementine was hoping that you would be the one to take care of her son.”

Tommy swallowed hard. He reached forward for the egg and pulled it to his side, still cradling Clementine’s head in his lap. He looked down at it sadly, more tears pooling in his eyes. He watched it quietly, setting a comforting hand on it. He sighed.

“I’ll-....I’ll do it.” He inhaled shakily, looking up at Kristin.

The angel smiled. She stood up and held her hand out to Tommy.

“It’s time to say goodbye, Tommy.”

The boy looked back at the dragon silently. He held her close, pressing a gentle kiss to her forehead.

“I’ll take care of him, I promise,” he whimpered, gently petting the dragon. He slowly scooted away, lowering Clementine gently until her head was resting on the nest comfortably. He stepped away slowly, wiping tears from his face before he picked up the egg. He took Kristin’s hand, and the Angel led him away. She stopped after they’d walked a few feet away and looked at Tommy. He glanced over to her, his lip trembling. The goddess extended her wing and wrapped it around the boy’s shoulders, pulling him to her side. The boy looked over at the dragon again. She looked so peaceful now, so accepting of the fact that she’d lived all she could. Perhaps Tommy could tell himself that she was asleep, and in her dreams she had her family beside her. Tommy nodded sadly at Kristin, silently telling her that he was ready.

“Goodbye Clementine,” Tommy whispered.

Kristin raised her hand. White light spilled from her fingertips, slinking toward the dragon in streams of glowing wisps.

Clementine began to glow, rays of light coming from her chest in bright colors. The dragon slowly began to lift upward into the sky, her form flickering as the colorful wisps began spinning around her, covering the dragon in light. The gleaming ribbons wrapped around the dragon, cloaking her in every hue. She stayed in the sky for a moment, only growing brighter. As much as it hurt Tommy to look, he stared in awe, overtaken by the beauty of the color and light.

Like a firework the light exploded, setting the world alight. As if a dark veil on the sky had suddenly lifted, gleaming orbs began to appear in the sky, covering the void in white specks and beacons of various colors. The once dark sky now shimmered like silk, reflecting purples and pinks, blues and yellows, oranges and greens. Waves of different hues danced across the night sky like the northern lights. The white dots speckled and flickered in quick bursts of white, wrapping around the world in a mesmerizing blanket of sun.

Tommy gasped softly, tears pouring down his face as he looked up, his eyes bright with color and light.

“Stars.” He laughed weakly.

They stood there for what felt like hours, staring up at the sky in silent awe, now alight with stars and constellations and galaxies of every color and shade.

Tommy stared at the beautiful sky solemnly, holding back a whimper before glancing back up at Kristin.

“Will-....will she be okay?” He asked softly.

The goddess smiled. She leaned down and set her hand on Tommy's shoulder with a comforting grin.

“Of course she will be. Look here, Tommy.” She pointed up. Tommy followed her finger, looking where she was gesturing to.

Amid the colorful lights sat one star that was brighter than the rest. It blinked softly as they looked at it, flickering with a gentle brightness. Close beside it sat a single light blue star, one that also seemed brighter than the other's. It felt familiar in a way.

“She's there. And she's not alone. She has the stars to keep her company.”

Tommy smiled, his face glowing with the light that reflected off of his tears.

Kristin lowered her wing, turning to face Tommy.

“Well, my little star. It’s time for you to go home.”

Tommy looked up at the Goddess with wide eyes.

“W-what?” he asked quietly

Kristin gestured to the middle of the island with her obsidian colored wing.

Instead of the nest that had been there minutes ago, there now stood a familiar, spinning void, filled with stars.

“This portal will take you home, back to the overworld. You’ve done enough here, and it’s time for you to return.”

The boy stared at the portal silently, hardly breathing.

Why? Why was he so afraid?

He knew that his friends didn’t hate him, and he knew no one would hurt him. So why did the thought of seeing them all again scare him so much?

He stepped backwards, trembling as he clutched the egg protectively to his chest. He looked up at Kristin, his eyes sad and afraid.

“I can’t- I can’t go home yet. I’m not ready.”

The goddess was silent for a moment, regarding Tommy sadly. Finally, she nodded slowly.

“That is alright, little star. If you don’t feel ready yet, you don’t have to go.”

Tommy smiled thankfully. Kristin stepped toward him, holding her arms out. Tommy held the egg close to him before going to hug Kristin. The goddess wrapped her dark wings around the two, and a quiet comfort settled across them. He exhaled softly.

“Take care of each other, okay?” Kristin said gently, her voice echoing.

“I will.”

When Tommy opened his eyes again, he stood at the base of the end city. The goddess was gone.

His home looked so unfamiliar against the stars, but it was calming. It felt like home even though it didn’t. Like the overworld but different, The End but not.

With a shuddering sigh Tommy began making his way to the center of the end city.

Even though he had memorized every confusing twist and turn of the island’s labyrinth-like structure, mapping the stairs and rooms during his years here, he couldn’t help but feel like he was lost as he walked on, cradling the egg in his arms.

When he finally made it to his room, he sat down on the bed quietly. He stared at the egg in his lap, the scales across its surface so achingly like Clementine's. Tears began to fill his eyes as he looked at it, sobs raking across him.

For the first time in a long time, Tommy fell asleep crying, without his dragon by his side.

Chapter End Notes

well....It happened and I'm sorry, but i promise from here on out, it will not get this sad. if anything, things get better.

I Shall Tell The Player A Story.

Chapter Summary

A lot of this is from the ending poem because i cry everytime i read it. Its literally the most beautiful thing ive ever heard.

A requiem.

Chapter Notes

// blood, mention of death

I shall tell the player a story.

The dragon was old.

She was made by and had stood at the sides of gods. She was older than the world she lived upon. Her goddess created the void of islands for her. She was the first to grace its lands, her claws the first to step upon the stone of The End. The world was shaped by her footsteps and the beat of her wings, and the close watch of her bright eyes, and the gentle roar of her powerful voice.

From the start she hadn't been alone, as her god graced her with brilliant creatures to protect and a mate, along with a son.

Over time the Endermen she'd grown acquainted with began to change, and soon they'd built cities and written books, shaping and changing the world around them for the better. They taught her their language. The Enderpeople cherished the Dragon, giving her and her mate their respect and their treasures. They never quite understood how the dragon, who they thought to be a god herself, treated them as friends, as close family, as equals. They welcomed her playfulness and care nevertheless.

The first day she encountered an overworlder, she'd been curious, but delighted. As a strange sound echoed across the sky, signalling the arrival of a newcomer, she flew to her home island, where she found a frightened human standing. She brought the man to the island of the ender hybrids where he was welcomed with food and gifts and parties. She'd noticed the strange being tapping away at an odd device he'd brought with him.

She never understood what it meant until more overworlders began to show up, this time with nets and weapons and the intent of harm. When they'd come they'd unfortunately started their journey of The End at the First Island where her egg lay. Her mate had gone to defend their child while she warned the Enderpeople of the intruders.

When she'd arrived, her mate was alone, the bodies of the overworlders already on their way to respawning. She had to watch as he lost his final life, the third life to be taken by the overworlders that day.

When She appeared to help move her mate's soul to the afterlife, the dragon let her goddess know of the terrible tragedy that happened that day, and her goddess had moved the portal with tearful apologies for the fact she couldn't erase it entirely. She had no control of the overworld, only the deaths that occurred within it. She was not the one to make the gateway between the worlds, and she could not destroy it.

As years passed, then decades, then centuries, the Enderpeople began to grow fewer, until the only thing that remained of the lost civilization was crumbling cities and dusty books. She was left alone, left to care for her egg, not even knowing when she would get to meet her son. The only confirmation she had that he was not gone already was that her goddess never showed up to carry him away. For thousands of years she stayed there quietly, guarding her son, never leaving his side. She hardly ate, only leaving the island when the painful hunger eating away at her became too much to bear.

She remembered the day her quiet routine ended. The terrifyingly familiar sound of someone crossing the barrier between The End and The Overworld echoed across the sky. The dragon searched for the overworlder for days until she finally found him. A small frightened human lay before her, brandishing a sword shakily in front of him. His face was obscured by a white circle, and he wore cloaks of green. He seemed familiar in a way, matching the description of a god her goddess had told her of, but this man was simply human. She had crept closer to the frightened human, crooning gently to tell him that she was not going to harm him, despite the bitterness toward overworlders in her heart.

When she was close enough, the man's frightened self charged at her, and all the fear he'd seemingly had was gone. A ruse. He attacked the dragon, slicing her across the neck with his diamond blade. She had roared in pain and rage and struck the man across the chest, knocking him from the side of the island into the endless void below. He died instantly from the blunt force of the hit.

She had never lost a life until that day. She could feel it as her life dwindled, blood coating the grass as she slipped away.

When she awoke again, laying beside her egg, she could feel the missing part of her, torn away by that man.

It felt too soon that he returned, the terrible sound echoing across the sky. She had made sure no harm would come to her child before taking off, back to the island where the overworlders spawned.

It was the same man, cloaked in green robes and strange purple and grey enchanted armor. He was more prepared for a fight this time, his sword of a new, glimmering material, whispering with power and magic.

The beast growled at the man, challenging him, and they charged at each other.

The fight lasted for what felt like hours, then days. They were covered in blood and wounds, determination written on their faces as they swung and sliced toward each other relentlessly. They fought until they could no longer.

The human and the dragon lay on the island, watching each other as both's second life faded away. The last thing she remembered of that life was the shattered mask and angry eyes of the man. They both died at the same time, their bodies fading away in smoky wisps.

After that, she had sworn that any unfortunate overworlder that found themselves in The End would meet a quick fate.

Years passed as she waited, going back and forth from protecting her egg and guarding the island, waiting anxiously for another to show up so she could keep her son safe.

The day came almost a decade later.

She had been with her egg, fighting sleep, when that horrendous song echoed across the sky. She'd quickly taken to the air, flying the familiar path to the island where the overworlder would spawn.

When she arrived, the island was empty, all that remained of the overworlder being a scent. She followed its trail across islands and forests until she found him. The creature was asleep, but he woke up soon after she'd arrived.

She had been fully intent on killing the human that day, until she truly saw what they were.

It was just a boy. A child, frightened and scarred by the world. He had sad, dull eyes and blemished skin. His clothes torn and burned at the edges. He was shaking, trembling in the eyes of the beast before him.

And she knew that moment that she would not harm him.

The boy, Tommy his name was, was strange, unlike any human or other being she'd met before. He spoke languages, familiar and unfamiliar. She learned of English and the Piglin language, and he invented words of Ender when he did not know the true word for it. He told her stories of the above world, of wars and friendships, deaths and something called

birthdays. He told her of bees and snow. He sang her songs and told her of his friends. She liked to hear the stories of Phil, the man with familiar wings, and Ranboo, the Ender hybrid.

Her favorite stories he told her though were of the stars.

She listened with brilliant fascination as he told her of constellations and galaxies, planets and solar systems. He told her stories of gods, though she knew they weren't true. Tommy told her of a demigod, one of which the dragon did recall her Goddess's stories of. Her Angel had told her of the chaos deity, and she soon understood how her boy had managed to befriend the child goddess, both thriving in mayhem and finding joy in wreaking havoc.

She comforted him when he would cry, and smile with him when he would laugh. She would wake him from bad dreams and hold the boy close until his shaking subsided.

He gave her a name. Clementine, he called her. She was Clementine.

She played games with her boy, her favorite being one called Hide and Seek. He showed her many things, like farming, swimming, sewing and building, things Clementine hadn't seen in centuries but remembered well.

Clementine shared what she could with him. She brought him to islands full of gems and taught him to climb trees. She showed him how to fish from the sapphire ponds and took the boy on flights with her, heart warmed at the sound of his excited shouts and echoing whoops.

But there was one she could not let him know of.

Clementine trusted her boy. She knew that her boy would not hurt her son. But that deep part of her, betrayed by so many before, kept him away. She checked on the egg when she could, quick to return to Tommy. She never let him know of where she was going. She kept her child a secret.

Until she no longer could.

Clementine could feel her age catching up to her, wearing her down and weighing on her. She saw it in her boy too as he grew older, getting taller and stronger. Healing.

And though she hated to, she knew it was time for her to leave.

But she couldn't bear it.

She couldn't bear the thought of leaving her boy, already scared and hurt by the world, on his own just as much as she could not think of her son hatching, waking in the world for the first time and being alone.

Clementine knew that they would keep each other safe.

As she laid down, feeling her life fading, she looked to her boy. And he told her that he would keep the egg safe.

Even though she knew well he couldn't understand her, she said goodbye. She was finally ready to go, knowing her boys would be okay.

As her vision blurred, and her breathing slowed, she watched her boy. In the bleary sight she still had, she could see his bright blue eyes, and his golden hair and smile. She closed her eyes, holding the vision close to her.

And though she had never seen it, Clementine understood the sun.

And then she understood the stars.

In death she was alive.

Clementine became part of everything. She became the daylight. She became the night. She became the light. She was not alone. She was not separate from every other thing. She loved.

And as the stars she became a new dream. She dreamed again.

She was the universe.

She was love.

The Next Generation

Chapter Summary

sorry about those last two chapters. Love yall /p

take this, as an apology

Chapter Notes

warnings

mention of past suicidal thoughts,

Days passed. Tommy had grown quieter, more reserved. He hardly ate, only leaving the end city when the painful hunger eating away at him became too much to bear. About two or three years ago, after finding that if he focused hard enough he could control where he teleported to with the help of the plant, he'd started a chorus fruit farm just at the base of the city, and there was an island beside that one close enough to jump to that had a source of clean water, so luckily he didn't have to be awake for long. Whenever he left, he kept the egg close at his side, hidden away in the satchel across his shoulders. The few words he spoke were quiet and sad, little croons to the egg that he received no reply to. It seemed to be doing well enough, the dim light that shone off of it blinking in place with the creature's heartbeat. Whenever he could, Tommy was watching it, eyes practically burning from how long he'd had them open, staring relentlessly at the scaled object. Every day he waited.

Being without Clementine, without someone to share a conversation with, it almost felt like exile again, only this time he could actually feel each painful jab at his heart when he remembered that The dragon was not beside him. He'd counted everyday since she died, currently on his 14th. Every night he cried himself to sleep, but his dreams were full of loneliness and shouting. He could see faint silhouettes of men warring with a dragon, the world scattered with scarlet blood and pained roars, and the terrifying sheen of that godforsaken white mask amidst the battlefield. Watching. Waiting. Killing. Even for how many hours he slept, Tommy never woke up feeling well rested. He was constantly tired and bleary. During the few moments that he was awake he would weakly tend to his crucial needs and check that the egg was doing okay.

3 weeks after Clementine's passing.

21 days.

Tommy was sitting on his bed, cradling the egg close to him. He was staring at the ceiling in quiet thought, singing a familiar tune while ignoring the warm tears that fell down his face. It hurt to move at that point, as most of the time he was laying in bed. It was mentally taxing to even speak, but Tommy remembered that singing and speaking to things sometimes helped them grow, so he tried his best. He sighed weakly, the song dying in his throat.

The boy was startled by a quiet sound just outside his room. He pushed himself up and walked to the door, wiping his tears and quickly looking around the barren island.

On the bridge just outside his room stood an Enderman. The strange being towered over him, watching the boy with its striking violet eyes.

Tommy gasped, averting his gaze from the creature's stare, but it was too late, they'd already made contact.

Tommy folded in on himself, holding his arms above his head and quickly stammering pleas for the creature to not hurt him. He couldn't die. Not here. Who would care for the egg?

He waited for the being to strike. But when the blow never came, he slowly looked up.

The Enderman was staring directly into his eyes, unbothered by the shared gaze. It wasn't screaming as it usually would've been, instead just watching Tommy with a blank stare. The boy squinted at the creature before him, raising one eyebrow curiously.

"Hey-" he cleared his throat, his voice hoarse from disuse, "I think I know you. You're the one that was in the library, right?"

The creature regarded the man in front of it quietly. It looked down, watching the egg in Tommy's hold, before disappearing in a bright cloud of purple smoke and dust.

After that Tommy began to notice more Endermen around, watching him quietly, waiting.

6 days later.

27 days.

Tommy wiped sweat from his brow as he picked another chorus fruit from off the plant. He dropped it into the basket he'd made of grass and tree bark with a sigh. He looked out at his farm with a sense of pride before turning and walking away from it, carrying the full basket of chorus fruits off to where he'd left his things sitting. When he first got here, he'd tried planting the seeds he'd found in Techno's bag, but soon found that with no sun, the plants wouldn't grow. But luckily, the boy had found an alternative.

He stopped walking for a moment, the feeling of eyes on his back sinking across him. He looked around cautiously. On a nearby island he saw three enderman watching him closely.

They chirped something Tommy didn't quite hear and disappeared in purple clouds. The man shrugged and continued walking.

Sitting just beside the farm was the egg, wrapped carefully in one of Tommy's unused coats. He set down his basket and picked the egg up with a sigh, checking over it carefully. He lightly tapped the scaled surface with a fond smile.

"How ya doing in there little guy, everything okay?"

The egg didn't reply.

Instead, there was a bright flash of light and smoke. Tommy coughed, waving the purple cloud away. When he opened his eyes, the egg had disappeared, his arms now empty.

"..."

"WHAT THE *FUCK*?!" The boy screamed, spinning around, his heart racing in his chest. He looked around wildly for the egg, clawing at his hair. How could he lose it so easily? How did that even happen? *What* even happened?

As he whirled around, he sighed loudly with relief when he saw it sitting just a few feet away. The boy ran over to it, picking it up gently and checking to make sure it was unharmed before sitting down on the endstone. Finding the egg unscathed, he sighed again, slumping over. Tommy had to take a moment to catch his breath and ease the rapid beating of his heart, leaning his head back with a relieved chuckle.

"Don't-" he laughed weakly, "don't do that, you scared the *shit* out of me"

After that, the egg began to develop a mind of its own, teleporting rapidly around the small island whenever it pleased. It was a hassle to deal with, but one Tommy welcomed. It almost reminded him of himself when he was younger.

If the egg could cause this much trouble, Tommy couldn't imagine what the creature inside could possibly do.

And he couldn't wait to meet him.

It was a week after that that it finally happened.

36 days.

Tommy set the egg carefully on the desk, wrapping it in his coat before flopping onto his bed with a tired sigh. He shoved his face into the silk sheets, taking a deep breath.

He'd been wandering around the end city again, even though he'd already explored the labyrinth of buildings dozens of times before. The boy laid there quietly, letting himself drift off for a little while.

He hadn't slept well in the past month, with the egg teleporting as it pleased, his continuous nightmares, and the enderman constantly waiting on the surrounding islands, just watching him as he bustled about the islands. It was...eery

More of them had shown up lately, and Tommy now saw at least ten in a day. He wasn't sure what they wanted, as they never exchanged words with him. They watched silently from afar, teleporting away when the boy looked at them.

He sighed again, soaking in the comfortable silence as he waited for sleep.

The silence was broken by a sharp sound, like the sound of something breaking.

He hurriedly rolled off the bed, stumbling to his feet and rushing over to the egg. He carefully picked it up, turning the object over in his hands to inspect it with a worried whine and shaky hands.

A long crack ran down the side of the egg's scaled surface. Tommy gasped sharply, dread sinking in his chest..

"No- no no no no-" he stammered, sitting down on the bed as he held the egg carefully in his lap, staring at it with fearful eyes. He could hear his heart thudding in his ears. "*shit*- I- I must have set it down too hard- I-"

He was interrupted by another loud crack, a second splinter branching off the first.

Oh.

It was *hatching*

The ring of his heartbeat in his ears stopped, and he was overtaken by a feeling of awe. Tommy waited quietly as the egg began to break, the creature inside scrabbling at the cracking shell.

A piece of the egg fell off, and a small, grey claw poked out of the tiny hole it left. Tommy carefully reached forward with his finger, holding it right beside the small paw. The creature's tiny claw wrapped around his finger, and a small whimper came from the animal.

Tommy's heart *soared*

He waited patiently as the baby took its time breaking out of the egg. It took a few minutes, but soon the entire top half of the egg broke off, and he gazed at the creature inside.

A small dragon poked its head out of the egg, about the size of a young kitten. Its eyes were still closed, and it had no teeth yet. The creature had familiar, obsidian scales with a light purple sheen, sparkling in the faint lantern glow. The hatchling had tiny, black, stubby wings, the inside skin dotted with tiny white specks, and grey spikes along its back. The scales along on the underside of its neck were a dark shade of ebony purple. Tiny claws wrapped around Tommy's finger, and the creature let out a small mewl as its short, spiked tail wagged behind it.

Tommy picked the small, practically weightless pup up and cradled it in his arms, blinking away tears as he gazed down at the tiny dragon.

"Hey little one," Tommy sniffled, holding the creature gently, "My name's Tommy. I'm- I'm your brother I suppose."

The pup in his arms yawned, snuggling against the boy that held it and hiding its face in the crook of his arm, its tiny claws still wrapped around his finger. The boy let out a soft sigh, carefully squeezing the tiny pup in a warm hug.

For a while he sat there, watching the baby in his arms squirm and sniff around curiously. It let out light trills as it nuzzled around in Tommy's hold. Warm tears fell from his eyes as he smiled down at the pup, his chest burning with pride and wonder.

"You look just like your mom, ya know," He sighed gently, scratching the pup's chin. The dragon cooed back to him, cuddling against his chest. It trilled curiously.

"Her name was Clementine," He smiled fondly, petting the pup's back. The creature chirped at him happily with a light flutter of his wings. "Ya want to meet her?" Tommy asked softly. The baby answered with a quiet bark, squirming in Tommy's arms.

Tommy pulled himself to his feet, holding the hatchling carefully against his chest, and walked out onto the bridge just in front of his room. As he stepped onto the smooth, purple stone, he took a deep breath, looking up to the sky as he breathed in the night.

The starry sky hung above their heads, twinkling with light. The bright colors still stood out strongly, flowing in satin waves across the inky night. From the distant forests rang the bright songs of cicadas.

Tommy closed his eyes, basking in the calm serenity. If he listened closely, he could swear he heard whispers coming from the stars, speaking to him in silk hushes and sighs.

He opened his eyes with a solemn breath and looked to the baby in his arms. The dragon raised its head and quietly began to blink. It slowly opened its eyes.

The pup gazed at Tommy with white, quartz-like eyes, soft and bright like the moon. In the soft reflection the stars sparkled, flickering like lively firelight. It chirred happily as it met

Tommy's sky blue eyes, its wings fluttering softly. Tommy gently picked up the dragon, holding the pup so it could look up at the sky with him.

The creature was silent, watching the stars and the sky with recognition in his eyes.

"Ya see that star up there?" Tommy pointed up, leading the pup to look at the brightest star that hung in the sky, casting light across the endless void, "That's your mother."

The creature in his arms hummed softly, resting its head on Tommy's shoulder with its eyes still watching the sky.

"She asked me to take care of you. I promised her I would." He squeezed the pup in a gentle hug, wiping tears from his face with his shoulder. The hatchling trilled quietly, nuzzling Tommy's chin with its muzzle. He laughed softly.

"Hey! That tickles!" Tommy chuckled. The creature made a delighted, amused sound, waving its small paws around and nudging Tommy's face.

As they stood under the midnight sky, listening to the quiet world around them, Tommy glanced over at the small creature. The pup looked over at him with a curious trill.

"I think I know what to call you." He grinned. The dragon chirped delightedly, waiting expectantly. Tommy carefully picked up the pup and held him high above his head.

"I shall call you Calypso!" He exclaimed happily, lowering the dragon down to him again, "It's the name of a moon. Wilbur and Techno used to tell me all about astrology and Greek myths," Tommy laughed fondly. Calypso purred happily, snuggling against Tommy as the boy talked on. "Your mom's name meant mercy."

Tommy hugged the pup close to him, laying the dragon on his shoulder and resting his chin on its back. It purred against him, lightly nipping at his coat.

"I didn't even think about it when I named her that. It just came to me, like it was fate."

"She showed me mercy. I don't-...I don't know if I'd still be here if it wasn't for her. Surely I would've lost it if I was here by myself." He hummed quietly, staring up at the familiar stars with a familial sense of warmth growing in his heart. The stars twinkled in the sky like faraway bells, ringing with gentle melodies. The creature in his arms nuzzled him gently, pressing its muzzle against his cheek. "She saved my life. She's my family."

As they stood there, watching the sky with caring eyes, a light chirp came from the base of the end city.

Tommy hummed with confusion before he set his hand on the railing and carefully leaned over, looking down at the floor of the endstone island.

At the very bottom of the city stood several enderman, eyes focused on Tommy and the dragon in his arms. More teleported into the crowd, chittering amongst themselves. Tommy caught a few of the words being passed around in hushed chitters.

“Princes.”

“Sunshine.”

“Queen’s sons.”

“Moon.”

“King Sky.”

“Queen Star.”

Calypso let out a delighted bark, staring down at the strange creatures from his spot in Tommy’s arms. The enderman went silent, watching the two standing on the bridge closely.

All in unison the creatures bowed their heads. Moments passed, Tommy and the pup curiously watching the silent Enderman.

One by one the creatures began to teleport away, their heads still bowed as the crowd disappeared .

For a while after they’d left, Tommy stared out at the island, still confused as to what had just happened.

The pup in his arms had fallen asleep now, purring gently. Tommy cradled the dragon close to him and walked across the bridge again, back into his home. He lay down on his bed, Calypso sleeping on his chest. For a while he just stared at the ceiling, until he fell asleep.

That night, his nightmares were less intense, and he woke to the sound of the dragon pup purring beside him.

127 days.

“Alright Calypso, You’ve got it! This time for sure!” Tommy grinned encouragingly, holding the dragon pup high above his head. The baby chirred with a concerned look and an anxious flutter of his wings.

“Naaah, c’mon! You’ll get it, I’m sure of it.” The boy smiled brightly.

Tommy stood just below the towering pillars that held the end city in place, repeatedly raising the dragon up and down so his wings would catch the air.

It had been three months since Tommy and Calypso had met, and the pup had grown considerably in size since, now about the size of a full grown cat or small dog. Now, Tommy didn't know much about dragons or how they grew, but Calypso had been getting stronger everyday, and he now had full control over how his wings moved, so he was guessing it was time the pup learned how to fly.

"You've just gotta catch the air. I think. My dad told me all about how flying worked, it can't be that different, right?"

It was proving to be very different, because of the different materials and structures of dragon and avian wings. They'd been trying to help the pup fly for about 2 hours now, and though they were both exhausted, they kept going.

Calypso hummed uncertainly, glancing down at the endstone beneath him.

"I haven't dropped you yet, Caly! have some faith big man!" Tommy chuckled, lowering the dragon just in front of his face and pressing his nose against the dragon's muzzle with a playful giggle. The dragon batted him away lightly, sticking out its tongue with an amused purr.

"I'm right here to catch you, okay? Just try one more time!"

Calypso hummed cautiously, hesitating for just a moment, before nodding determinedly, opening his wings. Tommy's face lit up.

"Atta boy! You've got this, ready?" He crouched over, holding the dragon securely in his hands.

"3"

"2"

Calypso opened his speckled wings, his tail wagging behind him with anticipation.

"1!" Tommy jumped up, throwing the dragon into the air with a grunt. As soon as the creature was out of his grip, he opened his arms, stumbling back to stay underneath the pup.

Calypso was flapping his wings furiously, eyes scrunched tight as he slowly glided toward the ground.

"Come on, Caly! Keep going!" Tommy called up to the dragon, smiling encouragingly.

The pup flapped his small wings harder, and harder.

All at once he lifted up, steadily holding himself in the air. Calypso hesitantly peeled his eyes open, glancing behind him at his wings with a startled bark. A delighted smile lit up his face and he began barking down at Tommy, showing off his wings with a proud yip. The blonde raised his arms above his head, pumping his fists into the air with an ecstatic whoop. The pup swooped down, flying just over his head.

“I knew you could do it! Good job big man!” Tommy cheered, holding his arms out to catch the dragon that landed in them with a not so graceful tumble. He hugged the pup close to him, receiving a few playful bites from the creature.

The creature froze for a moment, before it sneezed, disappearing in a purple puff of smoke. Tommy gasped and spun around, looking for the pup, and saw him sitting just a few feet away, tongue lolling from its mouth as it panted happily.

Tommy was silent for a moment, focusing on the exhaustion in his arms from throwing the dragon in the air so many times.

“You-” He said flatly, “YOU COULD HAVE TELEPORTED UP THE WHOLE TIME?”

The pup barked with amusement, yet again disappearing in a bright purple swirl of particles, appearing farther away.

“Get back here, you brat!” Tommy cried with a playful laugh, racing across the island toward the pup who took off running.

For a few more hours they spent time practicing Calypso’s takeoffs and landings, assuring that the pup could get off and on the ground without Tommy’s assistance.

Tommy watched the pup flying in circles above his head with a warm, prideful smile.

And oh how he wished he could fly with him.

300 days.

Tommy laid back in the tall grass with a calm sigh, glancing over at the dragon beside him. The pup was rolling around in the cyan grass, flinging up flower petals and leaves into the air.

Currently they were on an island that was within jumping distance of the end city island, so luckily Tommy hadn’t had to use any Ender pearls.

(He could practically feel the eyes of the Endermen watching him each time one rolled out of his satchel.)

Tommy turned his attention to the sky, focusing on the stars with a warm grin. The lights twinkled brightly above him, whispering to the boys softly.

Ever since.....Clementine passed, Tommy had been studying the stars. He named them, creating and naming constellations around the star that was Clementine. He wasn’t the best at creating shapes in the lights, but it didn’t matter, because these were *his* constellations, his

and Calypso's. If he could see the patterns in the stars, the shapes of bees and guitars, then everything was okay.

He created as many constellations as he could think of, his list growing more everyday. He had constellations in the shapes of swords and dragons, crows and music discs. He'd given the whole sky its own constellation, six stars representing Tommy and his friends and family, and the rest simply what they were. Stars. The picture he'd painted was one of everyone he'd ever closely loved, watching the stars together.

The pup beside him chirred quietly, looking at him upside down as he rolled around. He began batting a flower beside him with his tiny paws. Tommy sat up, reaching over to pet the dragon's belly. The dragon bit at his hand playfully.

"Hey, your teeth are getting sharp big man!" Tommy laughed, pulling his hand away and instead rubbing the pup's head. He reached into the satchel at his side and pulled out a large jar filled with cooked fish. Since the pup was born, Tommy, not knowing what the baby should eat, gave him mashed pieces of fish, but now he was big enough to eat it on his own. Tommy picked one of the pieces out of the glass and tossed it into the air. Calypso flew into the air, delicately catching the fish and landing back on the grass before circling back to Tommy. The blonde held his fist out and to the pup, who hit his hand with one tiny paw, performing a trick Tommy had told him. Tommy giggled, pulling his knees up to his chest as he watched the dragon run around the island.

Calypso stopped running, leaning down to sniff a patch of yellow and white flowers. Tommy smiled and stood up, walking over to the pup.

"What'cha got there?" He grinned, squatting down beside the pup. Calypso looked at Tommy, then back at the flowers, panting happily.

The blonde grinned warmly, and reached forward to the patch of flower. He began picking them and weaving the stems together tightly. Calypso watched him quietly with fascination.

When he was finished, Tommy set one of the two flower weaves on Calypso's head. The pup hummed curiously, tilting his head as the garland fell around his eyes. Tommy giggled with amusement, pulling the ring of flowers out of the dragon's way.

"Here you go, your majesty. A crown fit for a prince." He leaned back, smiling proudly as the pup began wagging its tail happily. "My friends Tubbo and Ranboo taught me how to make em a while ago. When Tubbo was a little kid, he used to make em for everyone he met. He made hundreds of the *damn* things! My room was covered in em!" Tommy chuckled fondly at the memory, coming home to the Caravan to find the windows dawned in wreaths of colorful flowers. Seeing the festival decorated from head to toe and red white and blue chrysanthemums. Finding Wilbur's grave covered in blue Irises and Hydrangeas.

Tubbo had always found a way of seeing the world like flowers, from the clouds in the sky to the rocks in streams. His favorite thing that wasn't a flower was fireworks. When he was little he called them night flowers.

Tubbo didn't like fireworks much anymore.

Tommy opened his eyes to find Calypso tugging on his sleeve with a worried whine. Tommy gasped softly, pulling the dragon into his lap.

“Sorry buddy. I guess I zoned out a bit there” He sighed. Calypso buried his head against Tommy’s chest, purring softly. The pup then climbed out of Tommy’s lap and began shuffling through the tall grass. When he emerged again, he held Tommy’s second flower crown in his mouth. He set it in the boy’s hand and sat back, waiting. Tommy was silent for a moment before making a slight “oh” in understanding. He bowed his head and set the flower crown on his fluffy blonde curls. Calypso barked happily, proudly showing off his own matching crown.

The blonde smirked at the dragon and quickly snatched him off the grass, pulling him down with him as they both fell into a fit of giggles, kicking up flowers around them. The stars above their heads twinkled brightly, watching the boys play under the chilly, endless night of their world.

Sky's The Limit

Chapter Summary

okaay so like- let's ignore the fiasco with me tryna post the art please and thanks haha. I'll try to figure that out, but for now, here's this chapter! See you next chapter! In which we see a few familiar faces ;)

437 days.

Tommy was falling. He could feel the cold wind rushing past him, tousling his hair. He should've been terrified, but the boy found himself calm as he fell through the air, hands clasped together against his chest. He drowsily opened his eyes, peering around as he finally stopped falling.

All around him was void and stars. He was floating in the constellation filled space, suspended in the air, weightless. He twisted around slowly, looking up at the colorful streams that glittered across the sky with wide, bright eyes. The islands were gone, leaving Tommy alone in the starry abyss. Colors flew past him, covering him in light and making his skin tingle as the streams of hues floated by. A soft sigh escaped his lips as he gazed around at the sparkling world before him.

As he looked at the stars, twinkling beside him with gentle melodies like bells, one star began to glow much brighter than the rest. He turned to see Clementine's star, blinking with a gentle glow. The light zipped toward him, spinning around the man in playful circles. He giggled as the star brushed up against his cheek. He held his palm up and the orb settled onto his hand, pulsing with bursts of pink and purple rays, the same dazzling colors of the dragon's violet eyes.

"Clementine!" He laughed wetly, smiling down at the star floating just above his palm, "I've missed you!"

"She missed you too," called a familiar voice, echoing against the sky around him.

Kristen faded into view, dressed in her same purple gowns and black veil, her obsidian wings worn proudly on her back.

"Hello Tommy," The goddess smiled.

"Kristin!" Tommy ran over to the angel, his footsteps sending out ripples against the black void like a dark pool of ink. He jumped into her arms, hugging the goddess back tightly with Clementine still gently held in his hand.

“My! Look how tall you’ve gotten!” The angel grinned. Tommy giggled brightly, pulling away from Kristin’s hug.

“What are you doing here?” The boy asked with a smile, cupping Clementine’s star gently in his palms.

“Well, I’ve just come to check on you, see how you’re doing.”

Tommy’s face lit up.

“I’m doing alright! Clementine, your egg hatched. His name’s Calypso!”

The star lit up with a bright flare, darting around rapidly.

Kristin smiled, blinking slowly. “She says that’s a great name.”

Tommy smiled proudly.

“Ya like it? Came up with it myself!”

“He’s doing great,” Tommy continued, chattering on to the star in his hands, “He looks just like you! I’ve told him all about you too! We play hide and seek all around the island, and I’ve taught him how to *stargaze*! And we made flower crowns together, like the one I made for you that one time!”

Tommy grinned, his smile faltering sadly. “I-I miss you so much Clementine. It’s not the same without you there. I wish you’d gotten to meet him. You should- should get to be with him,” the boy sniffled, trying his best to hold his weak grin.

“Oh, Sunshine,” Kristin smiled solemnly, leaning down and resting her hand on Tommy’s shoulder “She’s always been there with you.”

Tommy wiped tears from his eyes with his sleeve, laughing wetly.

“Sunshine?”

“That’s what she calls you. You’re her sunshine and Calypso’s her moonlight.” Kristin smiled, holding out her palm. Clementine’s star floated over to Kristin for a moment, twirling around her finger before zipping back over to Tommy.

“Awh, Clem,” Tommy giggled. The star in his palm glowed warmly. “He loves lookin’ at the *stars* with me. Your *star* is his favorite.”

Kristin smiled down at the boy softly, standing back up.

“Well, Tommy, Clementine actually has a gift for you.”

Tommy raised an eyebrow.

“A gift? What for?” Kristin giggled at the boy’s confusion.

“For giving her the best life she could have wanted. And for making sure her son has one too.”

Tommy chuckled.

“Dang, and I didn’t even get you anything.” The star in his palms blinked quickly, as if laughing.

“Do you accept?”

Tommy nodded with a smile.

“Of course.”

Kristin hummed.

“It’s time for us to part again Tommy. You will see Clementine again.”

Tommy looked down at the star in his hand with a sad sigh.

“Promise you’ll come visit me soon, yeah?”

The star flickered brightly in response. He hugged it close to his chest and held his hand out, the star floating back up into the sky.

“Thank you again, Tommy,” The Goddess hummed, her voice sounding further away, echoing in the starry space.

“Thank you,” he smiled back. As the goddess flickered out of view, the stars around him shifted. They began to slowly glide towards him, spinning slowly around. They started to orbit him faster, his vision filled with flares of bright colors. Streams of light and ribbons of violet and green danced around him.

A blinding, hot light erupted across his skin as Clementine’s star shot straight towards him, leaving a giant gash of light in the inky night sky. The star hit him square in the chest and a startled, muffled gasp escaped his lips. Amid the blaring light and heat a single voice called out to him.

Wake up

Tommy sat up in bed, sweat running down his face and arms. Calypso, who had been sleeping at Tommy’s feet, jumped up with a surprised yip, staring at the boy with wide, confused eyes. Tommy sighed, running his fingers through his hair as he leaned forward and pulled his knees to his chest.

“Morning bud,” the boy smiled, glancing up at the baby dragon sitting at the edge of the bed. He was still staring in shock at Tommy, eyes big and surprised.

“Didn’t mean to startle you bud, just a weird dream,” he wiped the sleep from his eyes and held his arms above his head, groaning with a satisfying stretch.

From the corner of his eyes, something shifted. Tommy jumped up with a sharp gasp, whirling around to find what behind him had moved.

Other than the startled baby dragon on the bed, and the frightened teen standing in the middle of the floor, the room was empty. Silent, and empty.

Tommy was still for a moment, almost too afraid to move, until he let out a weary sigh, his shoulders dropping.

Something behind him moved again. He spun and fell back with another, less than manly scream. His foot caught on the leg of his bed, and he dropped onto the mattress with a loud thump.

“Wha-what the fuck?” He asked shakily, his breathing now tight and jittery. He looked over to Calypso, to see if the dragon had seen what he had. He was still-*still* staring at Tommy.

“Wh-...what?” Tommy asked quietly, sinking sheepishly under the wide glare of the pup. The creature looked him dead in the eyes before cocking its head to the space behind Tommy, completely silent as it continued to stare. The boy slowly turned his head, looking at his back with a quickly growing fear in his chest.

There was in fact something behind him.

A giant, grey mass of feathers, shining in the quiet lantern glow like satin and silk. Every feather was pristine and sparkled with obsidian rays of pastel and rainbow. White, glowing speckles littered the cloudy plumage like the starry night sky, blinking and glowing with small pulses of light.

Wings.

There were wings on Tommy’s back.

Tommy’s fear dissipated, quickly replaced with startled and confused wonder. He stared at the new appendages with his mouth hung open in awe, his eyes dazed and bright. The boy slowly pulled himself to his feet, spinning around the room in slow circles to try and better see the wings. They moved easily, their movement as simple as moving his arms, though it was still stiff and unsure. When he willed it, the wings shifted. He closed and opened them several times, marvelling at the way every feather sparkled and gleamed in the silver light of the lanterns.

For a few moments they both stared in wonder at Tommy’s new wings, mouths hung open in silent disbelief. A bubbly laugh escaped Tommy’s lips as he spun around again, flinging his wings out at his sides. The tips of the longest feather’s pressed up against the wall. They were *huge*. Maybe the same size as Phil’s. Maybe *bigger*.

Tommy let out a sharp bark of laughter, throwing himself into the air with a rapid flutter of his wings.

“Calypso! Calypso, look at me! Look look look!” He giggled, his wings flapping quickly behind him in excited flutters, “I’ve got wings!” The dragon pup barked happily, flinging himself at Tommy. The boy caught him and spun around, wrapping his wings around the both of them and cradling Calypso in a tight hug. He held the dragon pup out in front of him, both purring in high pitched laughter. “Thank you Clementine! Thank you Kristin!” Tommy called out loudly.

He frowned, looking at his back again.

“You didn’t have to tear my coat, y’know,” he muttered to the air. If he listened closely he could’ve sworn he heard the distant chime of Kristin’s laughter.

“Come on!” Tommy was already racing out the door, across the lavender and amethyst bridges and down the winding steps of the end city. When he reached the bottom, he ran to a wide open spot of the island and set Calypso down quickly, standing up tall with a determined grin. Calypso tilted his head at Tommy questioningly. The blonde laughed brightly.

“Alright! Ready to see something awesome?” The boy asked cockily, setting his hands on his hips and tilting his chin up haughtily. Calypso barked excitedly, his tail wagging behind him and his wings fluttering in rapid bursts.

“Watch THIS!” Tommy shouted. He jumped up, throwing himself into the air. His wings flapped violently at his sides as he squeezed his eyes shut. He didn’t get very high up, as soon his wings closed up awkwardly and he fell ungracefully back to the ground with a loud thump.

He sat there for a moment, staring ahead with confusion. He tilted his head, looking at his wings as he opened and closed them again.

“Uh,” the boy mumbled, scratching the back of his neck sheepishly. He turned and looked at Calypso who was sitting a few feet away, staring at him curiously.

“Got any flying tips?” He grinned shyly with a meek chuckle. Calypso purred with a light chir, and romped over to the blonde playfully. Tommy looked up at the creature curiously as he climbed onto the boy’s shoulders.

He wrapped himself around Tommy and looked up at the stars. In a quick burst of light, the ground beneath Tommy's feet fell out from under him, and suddenly they were in the sky. The two seemed to hang in the air for a moment before Tommy started falling, his wings and arms flailing at his side as he let out a frightened shriek. Calypso hung tightly to Tommy’s shoulders as they fell through the air. Tommy’s wings weren’t working, the feathery appendages flapping uselessly against the sky. The ground was getting closer, the stone growing bigger and bigger as Tommy fell face first toward it-

And then the telltale sound of teleportation sang out once again, and Tommy landed lightly on the stone with a muffled oof. He sat up, shaking the shock from his mind. He looked over at the dragon pup, still resting unbothered on his shoulders.

“You-..” Tommy stammered, before raising his voice, “You could do that the whole time?!”

The dragon pup hiccuped with laughter-like-bark, resting its head on its claws. Tommy pulled himself to his feet, dusting off his wings and clothes as he continued blabbering on.

“You didn’t think to tell me you could teleport both of us? This information is kind of IMPORTANT Caly!” He argued, scratching Calypso’s chin with his voice laced with amusement. The dragon pup purred. He tilted his head at Tommy, gently flapping his wings. Tommy frowned, looking back at his wings again.

So far, what Tommy had gathered of Calypso's teleportation powers, was that if there was any place he could see, he could teleport there. Sometimes when the pup was tired and tried to teleport, he'd end up somewhere he didn't mean to. He'd gotten better at controlling it over time however.

"Think you can do it again?" Tommy grinned.

Calypso's eyes lit up with mischief and determination. In another quick flash, they were teleported into the air once again.

For an hour they followed that routine. Calypso would teleport both of them into the air, Tommy would try his best to fly, and when that didn't work and the ground got too close, the dragon would safely teleport them back down.

Tommy appeared on the ground in a cloud of purple smoke and light, laying on the stone with his chest heaving for air. His wings were flung out limply at his sides, feeling stiff and weak from their constant use. The boy threw his hands over his eyes, letting out a frustrated groan. Calypso chirped tiredly beside him, slumping to the ground.

"Oh come ON!" Tommy shouted, his voice echoing against the sky, "Why isn't this working?" He asked, though he knew neither of them had an answer. Calypso shook his head weakly, confirming Tommy's suspicions. The blonde sat up with a weary sigh, and begrudgingly pulled himself to his feet. He looked down at the pup on the ground beside him.

"C'mon Calypso, let's get some sleep and we can try again tomorrow." He muttered defeatedly. The pup whined sadly, stumbling to his feet and running over to Tommy. He clambered onto the boy's shoulders while chirping with frustration.

"Caly?" Tommy asked, tilting his head at the pup.

The pup squeezed his eyes shut, clinging to the boy's shirt.

"Wait Caly- No DON'T-"

The hum of teleportation rang out in echoes around him. When the light cleared and the smoke divided, a large shadow was cast over them. Tommy looked up with wide eyes as he began to fall.

They had teleported beneath the islands.

Tommy shrieked, his wings already beating at the air rapidly, though they weren't doing much to stop his fall. The boy realized with sinking dread that Calypso was no longer on his shoulders. He spun around in the air, eyes frantically searching the endless void beneath him. His eyes locked onto a small, black and purple figure falling below him. Calypso's eyes were shut and his wings were limp at his sides, the pup unconscious from the use of his powers. Tommy screamed out to the pup, flailing around as he tried to twist and turn in the air. He reached out to the dragon, but they were too far apart.

“CALY!” Tommy screamed desperately, flailing about as they plummeted down toward the endless fall. He looked over at his shoulder, arm still outstretched toward Calypso.

“Come on! Please! Work!” He cried to his wings, tears pricking at his eyes as he turned back again, watching the falling silhouette of the dragon pup with terror growing in his chest.

For a moment, the stars around him seemed to glow a bit brighter, and suddenly there was wind against his back, filling his wings with sparks of fire and shooting him down like a shooting star against the sky. He barreled into Calypso, throwing his arms around the pup and cradling him close to his chest. The wind spun around him, carrying back up until soon he didn’t need it, his wings beating on their own, holding him up in the sky. He looked around startledly, eyes searching for whatever had helped him. He looked back at his wings, flapping powerfully on their own and holding them aloft.

Tommy flew quickly back up to the sky island and fell to his knees as soon as he landed on the white endstone. He lowered Calypso onto his lap and shook the pup gently, his eyes pleading as he begged to the pup.

“Come on. Come on get up Caly” he whispered frantically, shaking the pup lightly.

Finally, Calypso’s tired eyes opened weakly, and he looked up at Tommy with a tired chir. Tommy hugged the pup to his chest.

“You brat! Don’t ever do that again!” he whimpered loudly, setting his chin on top of Calypso’s head as he cradled the pup against him. The pup chirred tiredly, apologetically.

“I know,” Tommy sniffled, “I know you just wanted to help, but you can’t put your life in danger for me. Okay bud?”

The dragon nodded tiredly and snuggled closer to Tommy with a gentle purr. The blonde smiled fondly and pulled himself to his feet before he began walking back to the end city. He paused at the base of the city, looking out across the island.

6 years. Tommy had been here for around 6 years, and never once had he felt the wind against him, unless he was flying with Clementine. This wasn’t wind from falling, this wind came from somewhere else. It was like magic.

The wind picked up yet again, tousling his golden locks with gentle whispers as he looked out across the starry sky. He looked up to the stars questioningly, but received no response. The stars deemed, as if to say *it wasn’t of my doing*. Tommy sighed deeply.

“I don’t...i don’t know who did that, but thank you. Thank you.” He whispered to the cold night air, before turning and making his way back to his room.

Many, many years ago, The End was a silent place. At first it was loud, filled with the sounds of cheerful song and laughter, but then it fell quiet.

But now the End was always alight with laughter and joyful shrieks and whoops of the new princes, the world alive once again

After the passing of their queen, the endermen had taken it upon themselves to guard the entrance to their realm. Constantly the spawn island was filled with enderman, closely watching the forest with attentive eyes. The only time they would break their close watch of the forest was when the cheerful sound of laughter echoed through the sky. The endermen would watch with pride as the two princes soared past, wings beating furiously against the sky as they glided through the stars, giggling as they spun around each other. They zipped between, over, and under islands, laughing the whole time. They played with the endermen as well. The princes would zip through the islands, followed closely by crowds of endermen that teleported after them. They'd participate in what the human prince called "tag". Despite being the inventor of the game, he wasn't very good at it. Each time the endermen teleported out of his way he shrieked and cursed loudly, arguing that their powers weren't fair.

One particular enderman was always there to watch them. Since the day they'd found the frightened boy huddled in the library, they'd been watching him, making sure the boy was okay. They never dared to go too near him, as they couldn't seem to forget the terrified look of the boy upon their first encounter. They only dared to get close when the boy became lonely. Ever since the enderman was always watching him closely, along with the new prince, Calypso. Their heart glowed warmly at the thought of the dragon pup, so like the queen and king they'd had before.

The endermen looked away from the spot where he stood as the familiar laughter of the human prince rang out across the sky. They looked up through the canopy of leaves as two figures passed overhead, wings beating against the sky as they shot through the air, leaving the echoes of excited whoops and cheers in their wake.

"Come on Caly! Keep up!" Tommy called behind him. The dragon pup barked annoyedly at the boy who turned back around, eyes set determinedly ahead. He looked over his shoulder again and paused when he realized the pup was no longer behind him.

Something smacked Tommy in the face. He turned with a shocked shriek to look at Calypso. The dragon pup chirped playfully, darting out of Tommy's reach.

"You brat! C'mere!" Tommy called out, turning sharply to fly after him. The sky echoed with the bright chime of their giggles as they weaved across it.

The Crisp Night Sky Of Winter

Chapter Summary

Well, here it is. The moment youve all been waiting for

Seeya next chapter ;)

Tommy stared at the journal held in front of him, laying on his back in the grass. The day was quiet, the sounds of distant cicadas filling the air. His charcoal pencil scratched against the paper rapidly as he sketched down the stars for the fifth time that day. He glanced over at Calypso, the baby dragon was chewing on a small crystal, holding it between his tinyclaws. He smiled and turned back to his notebook.

7 years. Ever since that call that day with drista, he'd started counting the days. He'd been here for seven years. Somewhere around 2573 days. Everyday after Clementine had died, he'd counted as well. It had been 734 days since the dragon had passed. Calypso was 2 years old now. Tommy wasn't quite sure how exactly dragons aged, but he was still mostly a baby. He was still small enough to sit on Tommy's shoulders. It had been one year since Tommy had gotten his wings. The feathers were in the best condition Tommy could keep them in with what little knowledge he remembered from preening his dad's feathers. All his clothes had been adjusted to fit his new plumage, the shirts and jackets cut with neat windows in the back.

Tommy had been teaching Calypso everything he knew. He taught him English, Ender, and even a little bit of piglin because who cares. They played tag daily, sometimes joined by the endermen, the creatures teleporting from different islands as they followed Tommy and Calypso.

A while ago he'd finally finished his crystal boots, but he didn't wear them often, as there was no need to. Currently the boots were back at the home island, tucked safely beneath his bed.

Tommy tapped the eraser of his pencil against his lip, frowning at the inky sky above him.

"Well, Bipso" Tommy jeered, chuckling at the way the pup growled at the nickname, "I think I've done it. I think I've named every single *star*"

Calypso squinted at Tommy unsurely, his eyes as if saying *There's now way you did that*. Tommy giggled again. "No really! I think I have!- Oh wait," He tilted his head, sitting up and

staring at a single star. He pointed toward it with his pencil and looked down at his journal again, flipping through the pages. "Did I name that one?"

Calypso stood up with a long stretch and trotted over to Tommy. He sat down next to the boy and followed where Tommy was pointing. For a while he stared at it, before nodding surely. He crawled into Tommy's lap and began pulling at the pages with his small teeth, fumbling with the paper. Tommy smiled fondly and began helping him flip through the journal.

The dragon slapped a tiny paw onto the paper with a wide grin. Tommy leaned down, squinting at the names jotted down on the book, then nodded. "Oh, right! That one's got a name, Thanks Bipso."

The dragon pup grumbled something and slunk out of Tommy's lap, back over to chew on his crystal.

As Tommy leaned back against the grass with a quiet sigh, a loud roar shot through the sky.

Tommy sat up quickly with a sharp gasp. The island beneath them was rumbling, shaking like thunder.

"Caly! Come here!" Tommy called quickly, jumping to his feet as he threw his satchel over his shoulder and raced over to him. The dragon pup ran over with a loud, frightened whimper. As Tommy pulled the pup into his arms, an enormous crack jutted out of the island, just below Tommy. With a powerful thrust of his wings he shot into the air, holding Calypso against him protectively. He spun around in the air, looking down at the island.

Before his eyes the island began to crack, the grass and stone shattering like glass. The sky rumbled deeply as pieces of the island began to fall.

They watched in horror as the ground split apart, shards of it falling down quickly and disappearing in the inky night of the endless sky below them. In mere seconds the island was gone, sinking into the abyss under their feet.

Calypso began to whimper with fear, clinging against Tommy. The boy swallowed down the dread rising in his chest and turned in the air, his wings hitting the sky as he threw himself forward, racing back to their home island. He could feel panic rising as he shot through the sky, wings already growing tired with how fast they were going.

As they flew on, islands around them began to fall, the pieces sending up earth shattering roars as they plummeted down, crumbling and disappearing into the void. Tommy was speaking to Calypso in hushed whispers, trying to soothe the frightened pup.

Finally he reached their home island. He stumbled onto the stone, using his wings to keep him up on his trembling legs. The city was still intact, only the very edges of the enormous island beginning to crack. All around them the sky roared, shattering and breaking as more

and more islands around them began to sink. Tommy could feel his own heart shattering, torn apart by dread and fear. His breath quickened, coming and going in short, tight gasps. Terror was rising in him, tears pricking at his eyes. Uncertainty and panic clouded Tommy's thoughts. The only thing in his mind was a single word, spinning around in alarmed whirls.

help.

Help. help

Help

help.

Tommy screamed.

"KRISTIN!" He threw his head back, spinning around the island, looking for any sign of the goddess. "KRISTIN!" Tommy hugged Calypso close to him, screaming again. Tears pricked at his eyes and he shook them away, quietly reassuring the frightened pup in his arms that everything would be okay.

"Tommy," came a voice from behind him, laced with worry. He spun around, sighing in relief as he ran to the Angel. She opened her arms and Tommy jumped into the hug.

"Tommy, I'm so sorry," The goddess spoke sadly. He pulled out of the hug, running comforting hands down Calypso's back to try and soothe the frightened pup.

"Kristin! What's-what's going on? It's all- It's all falling apart-" Tommy whimpered panickedly, eyes darting around the island as more small cracks began to slowly sink toward the center. He jumped back as a sharp slit appeared just beneath his feet. Kristin looked up at him sadly, her eyes clouded with bright tears.

"I'm so sorry. I should've told you this would happen but I just- I just couldn't stand to see you so afraid."

"Please Kristin! Just tell me what's going on!" Tommy pleaded, cradling the dragon pup close to him.

"Tommy. When I created Clementine, her soul was linked with the end. They are one in the same, a part of each other. But now, with her gone," She looked around sadly as another island in the distance crumbled and fell, "this world can not sustain itself."

Tommy stared up at the Goddess, his breath coming in short panicked huffs as understanding crawled around him.

"It's- It's all gonna be gone" the man said quietly. Kristin nodded regretfully before leaning down in front of Tommy, taking one of his hands and carefully holding it in her own.

"I'm so sorry Tommy, but it's time for you to go."

Tommy watched the angel with disbelief. Everything. It was all going to be gone.

He'd noticed lately. He'd noticed that the crystals of the island had lost their shine. The only star that still truly glowed was Clementine's. The animals had disappeared, the ponds empty. The grass had grown dimmer, and the flowers were wilting.

"Tommy," Kristin said bluntly, "I know you're scared, but you don't need to be afraid. No one will hurt you there-"

"Okay,"

Kristin sat back, eyes wide as she looked at the boy.

"Okay. I...I think I'm finally ready to go," Tommy said. He looked up with a sad, tired smile.

Kristin sighed, her expression warm. She pulled Tommy and Calypso into a hug, wrapping her dark wings around the princes.

"You are so brave Tommy." She said softly. Tommy sniffled.

"But...But what about Calypso's home?" He asked sadly. The goddess looked down at the pup carefully tucked in Tommy's arms. She smiled.

"I think his home is wherever you are Tommy."

At this the dragon pup purred quietly, snuggling against him.

The loud, piercing shriek of something breaking echoed. Kristin pulled out of the hug, setting her hands on Tommy's shoulders. "Grab your things, I'll try to hold up the island for as long as I can. And don't fly yet unless you must, we have a long trip ahead of us to the gateway."

The goddess turned her back to Tommy and walked to the edge of the island, mere steps away from the growing cracks along the stone rim. She held her hands up and they began to glow with a bright purple aura, her opened wings reflecting the violet shades like starlight. The cracks on the ground began to stitch themselves together with a purple glow.

Tommy turned on his heel and raced toward the city. He ran up the steps and through the winding halls and rooms with Calypso tucked safely against his chest.

Tommy finally reached the center of the city and raced into the room. He began rooting through the drawers and closet, shoving his clothes into his satchel with Calypso still held tightly in one arm. He set the dragon down on the bed for only a second to pull on his crystal boots. He threw books into the bag, quickly grabbing the translation journal and shoving it into one of the pockets. As he turned, picking up Calypso and hugging the dragon safely to his chest, he paused in the doorway. The boy quickly ran back into the room, grabbing the bundle of flower crowns sitting on the desk. He threw them around his neck and ran across the bridge, away from the city.

As he reached the bottom of the city, he raced over to Kristin. The ground was barely still together, the stone cracked and split with deep purple slits in the stone. Kristin was straining, the power from her hands flickering wearily.

“Kristin!” Tommy called, running over to her. As the goddess turned, the light faded from her hands. She darted forward, grabbing Tommy by the arm before opening her giant obsidian wings and shooting into the air.

The ground beneath them shattered finally, the pieces falling in scattered groups of crumbled stone. He covered Calypso’s eyes as the city began to fall apart, the last buildings of the lost civilization cracking. The city broke down, and began to fall along with the rest of the island.

In moments it was all gone, lost to the shadowy void below. Tommy held back a sob as he watched his home disappear.

Kristin quietly took his hand and turned away.

“We must go now,” the angel said quietly, her own voice filled with sadness. Tommy nodded and followed after her. Calypso whimpered sadly from his spot in Tommy’s jacket. He nudged the boy lightly with his snout, and Tommy leaned into him, tears falling down his cheeks.

The flight lasted hours. Tommy’s wings were screaming with exhaustion, cramped and aching. He panted heavily, eyes fixed forward as he waited for the island homing the portal to come into view.

“Just a little further,” Kristin assured the boy.

Suddenly there was a familiar wind against their backs, carrying them forward. Kristin whispered a thank you to someone not there as she flew on.

Finally after what felt like decades, Tommy saw the tops of the obsidian columns fade into view. He breathed a sigh of relief. But the sight of the island still rooted dread in his heart, the feeling of being alone weighing down on him. He shook the thoughts from his head.

Calypso was staring with wonder at the island, his eyes quiet with a strange recognition and dull sadness

The island was full of enderman, all crowded together and speaking to each other in hushed whispers and chirps. They quieted as the winged figures approached, landing near the center of the island quietly once the endermen had made room for them.

Tommy looked around at the endermen. It was still odd to him that their shared gazes no longer frightened each other. Every endermen bowed their heads quietly.

“So...this is it then,” Tommy said quietly. He turned.

Just feet away stood the portal, the gateway between worlds. It looked just as he remembered it. A blacker than black void filled with tiny stars, spinning in a lazy, endless spiral. He sucked in a breath.

Kristin nodded silently.

“It is.”

He stood there quietly, looking down at the baby dragon in his arms. With a tired sigh he turned back to Kristin, his eyes bright and glossy with tears. He smiled weakly up at the goddess, holding back a sob.

“Th-....thank you Kristin. Thank you for giving me a home.”

The goddess smiled, setting her hands on Tommy’s shoulder.

“You will always have a home Tommy.” He nodded quietly.

“Take good care of Calypso, okay?” Kristin smiled at the boy, petting the dragon pup gently. The creature purred loudly, leaning into her hand.

Tommy nodded, sniffing. He looked around at the hundreds of endermen gathered around him.

“They will need somewhere to live in the overworld now. Keep them safe.”

Tommy smiled.

“I promise.”

Kristin pulled him into a hug, holding the boy tightly in her arms before stepping away, bowing her head.

Tommy took a deep breath and turned his back to Kristin. He looked down at the pup cradled in his arms. The pup smiled up at him with his bright eyes, nuzzling Tommy.

“Tell Clementine I said bye, okay?”

“I don’t think that will be necessary,” Kristin said softly. Tommy lowered his head and stepped up to the portal, taking a shuddering breath as he stared into the abyss before him. He looked over his shoulder at Kristin. She grinned back.

“And say hello to my son for me.”

The last thing he saw was the kind smile of the goddess’s eyes before the darkness sunk in around him. He closed his wings around Calypso, clinging to the dragon as he cradled the pup to his chest.

Suddenly he was falling. Stars streaked past him as hushed whispers, calm voices, and warm song filled his mind, echoing against the night.

The stars were speaking to him.

The universe sang soft hymns and encouraging cheers as the world around Tommy streaked past him, clouding his vision with dark and light.

and the universe said I love you
and the universe said everything you need is within you
and the universe said you are stronger than you know
and the universe said you are the daylight
and the universe said you are the night
and the universe said the darkness you fight is within you
and the universe said the light you seek is within you
and the universe said you are not alone
and the universe said you are not separate from every other thing
and the universe said you are the universe
and the universe said I love you because you are love.

The world around Tommy flashed with a bright, blinding light, and the voices went silent.

He was floating, suspended weightlessly in the sky. His body felt fuzzy, as if he wasn't entirely there. Tommy peeled his eyes open, and was overtaken by the light that filled the sky. The world was dark, the inky sky scattered with small white stars. He looked down at Calypso, the pup still cradled safely in his arms.

The dragon was glowing, his scales bright with white, cloud colored waves and flickers of light. He looked at himself with a startled chirp, then up at Tommy, his white moonlight eyes wide in surprise. Tommy looked at himself.

He was glowing as well, his hair and the feathers of his wings blazing like fire. With the light of the sun he shimmered, the light around him wavering and flowing with blinding flashes of fiery gold and flares of red and yellow

As he looked up, mouth hung open in awe, the stars shifted. They began to sink together, the light growing and dancing until a clear shape was made in the small specks of color..

There, made of stars and light, stood Clementine. As she moved, the stars moved with her, now a part of her. She stepped over to Tommy, crooning gently. Tears pricked at Tommy's eyes as he reached forward. The stars sung across his skin as he pressed his palm against the dragon's face. A happy, wet laugh escaped his lips.

"Clementine- It's- It's really you-" He giggled. The dragon hummed deeply, leaning into Tommy's hand,

Calypso chirped with excitement, jumping out of Tommy's arms. He ran to his mother, barking and whining anxiously as he whimpered, pressing against the dragon. Clementine leaned down, softly nuzzling the pup with a fond croon.

Suddenly a familiar wind filled the air, pulling at Tommy's hair and feathers. The sky unveiled, taking the form of wings. A large dragon appeared out of the darkness, with kind blue eyes and huge, shimmering wings. He stepped toward Clementine, softly nuzzling the dragon.

"It was you!" Tommy laughed. "You saved us!"

The king dragon nodded with a deep hum, setting his chin on Clementine's head with an echoing purr. The dragon then leaned down and nuzzled Calypso, smiling fondly at the pups's warm chirps. Tommy smiled, stepping closer to the family of dragons.

"I'll call you Caelus," Tommy decided, "If that's alright with you."

Caelus nodded. Tommy giggled brightly.

"I think it fits. It means sky."

As Tommy stepped closer to them, the dragons opened their wings. They leaned down, wrapping Tommy and Calypso in a gentle embrace, wings cloaked safely around them. Calypso climbed into Tommy's arms, purring as he looked around at his family before climbing onto the boy's shoulders.

"Clementine?" Tommy said softly. The dragon hummed, leaning down to Tommy.

"Thank you. For Everything." He wrapped his arms around Clementine's head, holding the dragon close in a warm hug. Clementine blinked slowly at the boy, her eyes kind and safe.

Thank you Her gaze said back.

Then the blinding white light took over again. He smiled as he fell again.

Ice bit at Tommy's skin, digging into him like shards of glass. He could feel a soft wind gliding through the air. The chill bit at him harshly. Snow seeped into his crystal boots. He opened his eyes with a yelp as Calypso licked him across the face, the pup standing on his chest.

"Come on dude!" He scoffed, wiping his face with his cold sleeves as he sat up.

The world was covered with snow, the tundra glowing in the moonlight. All around him was a forest, tall evergreen trees stretching high into the air, covered in nettles and snow and the ebony bark lined with runes carved into the trunks. He sat up slowly, gasping quietly as he looked at the world above. His wings were cold, extremely unused to the colder environment. Looks like they were out of the picture until he could get used to the snow again. He pulled Calypso into his arms and shakily stood up, head tilted back.

The night sky awaited him, lit with colors that streamed and wavered against the darkness. It was the northern lights, flowing in soft waves across the night. The night was cloudless, leaving the sky above to Tommy.

The stars hung above their heads, twinkling and flickering softly.

And with a gasp, he realized that he knew those stars. Each light in the sky he'd spent hours studying, counting, naming, drawing. He recognized every single one.

It was the same stars as the ones in the end.

And amid all of them, just above the horizon, stood a star brighter than the rest, shining like amethyst.

Clementine.

A gentle, bubbly laugh escaped his lips as he gazed up at the sky, twinkling and shining down on him.

His stars.

He still had his stars.

Tommy looked around, head tilted back as he spun with eyes full of wonder and strange familiarity. He was home again. The overworld smiled back at him with sparkling snow and gentle stars.

Calypso climbed onto Tommy's shoulders, setting his paws on Tommy's head as he looked up at the sky, almost trying to get closer. His eyes were bright and awestruck as he gazed at the moon. Tommy remembered that the pup had never seen this world before as he looked down at the snow with confusion. Tommy laughed gently and picked Calypso up off his shoulders. He set the pup down in the snow. The pup yelped as the cold powder touched him. He seemed to realize quickly that it wouldn't hurt him.

Tommy cackled amusedly as the pup began tearing through the snow, kicking up ice as he zipped around, wings flailing at his sides. He lept into the air and landed in the snow ungracefully, then began rolling around. The pup barked loudly as he twisted about. Tommy reached down and picked up a clump of snow before quickly launching it at Calypso. The pup yipped in surprise as it hit him. Tommy howled with laughter, cupping his hands in front of his mouth to warm them up.

A soft chirp came from behind him. He turned to see the enderman from the library watching him carefully. A few more enderman stood behind them, clicking nervously with curiosity.

Tommy smiled warmly up at the creature.

"Hey..I'm uh.. Sorry about your home" He chirped gently in ender. The endermen bowed its head, murmuring softly.

All well

Tommy reached down as Calypso stumbled over beside him clumsily, paws tripping in the snow. He set the pup on his shoulders and turned back to the creature.

“Well, you’re free to wander about wherever you want, this is your home now,” Tommy said quietly. “And don’t worry, I’ll put in word around the server that you aren’t to be bothered. They’ll listen to big man Tommy.” He smiled cockily. The endermen chirruped with laughter.

Tommy turned around, looking up at the sky. He fixed his eyes on Clementine’s star, shining brightly in the distance, and began walking forward with his wings pressed tightly against his back. The endermen followed behind him for a few minute’s, gazing at the world curiously.

“ Oh, and uh..” Tommy grinned mischievously stopping in his tracks, “ Don’t let anyone know I’m here yet, I want it to be a surprise”

The tall creature nodded, and in a flurry of purple smoke, the group disappeared, teleporting away to continue their lives.

And Tommy walked on to start his anew.

The sun was rising slowly, bathing the world in a gentle orange cloak. Flocks of birds flew overhead, chirping against the sky. Tommy walked on, eyes set on the bright star above.

Even with the risen sun, Clementine’s star was still glowing strongly, standing amid the pink of the sky. Calypso chirped softly from Tommy’s shoulders, looking around at the world with wonder, amazed by every little cloud that passed and creatures that ran about the tundra. His favorite thing though, was the sun. Tommy sighed and opened his wings. They were still too frozen up to use, but the red sun against the feathers felt soothing and warm.

Tommy came to the top of a large hill, overlooking a wide, open snow valley. He looked down with a heavy heart.

A smile crept onto his lips and tears clouded his eyes as he looked down at the tiny cabins, smoke rising from their chimney’s, and the silhouette of his brother walking about the snowy yard.

You. You. You Are Alive [part 1]

Chapter Summary

:)

Almost cried writing this.

I dont cry alot.

Warnings: abuse reference, death mention

Techno pocketed his eyeglass with a huff, turning away from the sky as he leaned down to grab his notebook.

A few years ago, a new star appeared in the sky, seemingly overnight. He remembers waking up, going to tend to the animals, and immediately noticing the sky's newest decoration. This wasn't like any other star he'd seen. It was there longer than the other, normal stars, as it still hung in the sky even when the sun was rising, before disappearing once the world above turned blue. Techno knew stars, he used to study them when he was younger, and he and Phil would travel, and then sometimes with his brothers. Sure he hadn't been as interested in them as Wilbur and Tommy were, but as of late he'd been more intrigued by them. It had never been charted before in any of the maps he read. It seemed to flicker with colors, deep violets and pinks, though that could have just been the northern lights playing with the sky.

He scribbled down the date next to his notes, the words the same as yesterdays, in his journal before turning and shoving it in his pocket. A strong wind blew through, sending a chill up his spine. He could easily fight off the cold, but ever since...that day, he hadn't felt worthy of wearing the piglin form. His hair was getting longer, and he knew soon he'd need to cut it again. He adjusted his cape around his shoulders with a huff as he leaned down to pick up his bag of other star charting equipment.

His pointed ears pricked up at the sound of footsteps crunching against the snow. He stood up quickly, turning to see what was near him. The sun was bright in the sky, blinding him as he tried to look up. He cupped his hand over his eyes and fixed his glare on the woods beside his house.

A dark figure stepped out of the trees, their features hidden by shadows. He recognized the silhouette however, the giant wings upon the figures back held up proudly at his sides.

"Oh, hey Phil," Techno smiled, turning away from the man. "I didn't think you were coming till tomorrow." He hoisted the bag over his shoulder and began walking back toward the cabins.

A sharp laugh pierced the air.

Techno stopped in his tracks, staring dead ahead, almost afraid to turn around because if he did—..
it might not be true.

It was...just another hallucination.

It wasn't real. It never was. It wasn't-

"Jeez Techno, I know it's been a few years, but I didn't think I was *that* old."

His breath hitched in his throat painfully.

Techno slowly turned his head, frozen in the snow. He didn't breathe. He didn't speak. He simply turned, eyes wide, disbelieving.

The figure continued talking as they stepped out of the forest's shade, their blue eyes and blonde hair shining in the sun, brighter than he'd ever seen. Surely—no—no it couldn't be. It was only Phil. It had to be.

"You seriously mistook me for Philza?" The man laughed brightly, "quite frankly, I'm offended"

And all at once, everything inside Techno shattered.

—

Tommy wasn't sure what he expected of Techno as the man suddenly came rushing towards him, kicking up snow in his tracks.

Maybe he expected Techno to seize him by the collar of his shirt and scream at him for being a coward. Maybe he'd hit him or something—no, he wouldn't do that- right? Some deep part of Tommy whispered that maybe—no...that wouldn't happen-

And just as he thought those words, pushing down that greedy, lonesome desire, the selfish wish was granted.

Techno barreled into him with such force that he stumbled backwards, trying to gain a footing in the icy snow. Calypso jumped down with a chirp, watching from behind Tommy. Arms were thrown around him, pulling him into a crushing hug. The man held onto him tightly, as if he were to let go, the boy in front of him would disappear, gone again like melted snowflakes. Techno was shaking, but it wasn't the cold of the tundra doing this to him.

"You're okay" Techno choked out, his voice barely a whisper as he held fast to his little brother. "You're okay- you're-" he paused for a moment, softly running his fingers through Tommy's hair, "you're real..."

Tommy sighed warmly, voice thick, tears threatening to fall. He let them. He returned the hug with pain in his shaky voice.

"I'm here Tech, I'm okay"

Techno pulled away from the hug, his eyes searching Tommy's blue for some sort of lie. A choked laugh escaped his lips.

"And just look at you! You're almost as tall as I am- you're-...you're Tommy," Techno laughed quietly, stricken with relief and pain and joy and disbelief. The boy almost winced at hearing the name from his brother's mouth. Instead of the last time he heard it, where the voice was tight and angry, this time it was soft and sorrowful. "Tommy," he whispered again.

"Yeah, yeah, it's me," Tommy smiled.

"How is- How is this possible-? We thought-" Techno practically sobbed, shaking his head gently, "we thought you drowned-" Tommy giggled at that.

"It takes a bit more than some dumb water to get rid of me, Blade."

"But- But *how*? We couldn't f-find you."

Tommy looked down quietly.

"It's- well, it's a long story," he looked up at Techno with a small, playful smile "I don't think you really wanna hear it though."

Techno shook his head roughly, crouching down in front of Tommy.

"I'll listen. Anything you have to say I'll listen," he smiled, eyes squinted as warm tears rolled down his face, "I just- I can't believe you're here-" his eyes flicked to Tommy's back, widening in surprise. He stood up, carefully reaching toward the wings. Tommy laughed and held one of them up to Techno.

"Where the hell did you get these from-?" He asked, chuckling with confusion. Tommy shrugged.

"Like I said, it's uh- a long story," the blonde giggled, shivering against the wind slightly. Techno gasped sharply.

"Oh jeez- let's get you inside, you'll catch your death out here-" he set his hand on Tommy's shoulders and began walking towards the cabins.

Tommy looked down at his satchel as he heard shuffling in it. Calypso had crawled into the bag. He poked his head out curiously. Tommy raised a finger to his lips with a mischievous smile, and the dragon grinned before slipping quietly back into the satchel.

They walked across the snowy pathway to Techno's cabin. It still looked the same as he'd last seen it, other than the newest cottage off to the side, and a rather large polar bear tied to the railing outside. Tommy stopped as Techno kept walking, eyeing the beast with confusion.

"Where the hell did you get a fuckin bear?" He asked sharply, raising an eyebrow. Techno stopped on the stairs and turned around with a "hm?", eyes flicking over to the creature. He chuckled.

"Oh, that's just Steve, don't mind him," he gently leaned down to stroke the bear's head. The animal hummed deeply, leaning into the hand. As Tommy walked up the steps, he too carefully pet the polar bear. Calypso growled from inside his bag quietly, peeking out of the leather flap with slanted eyes.

“What was that?” Techno asked, cocking his eyebrow. Tommy stuttered.

“Uhh- nothin, tell ya later,”

Techno frowned in confusion before shrugging. He opened the door, stepping aside to let Tommy in first. As he stepped into the warmth of the cozy house, he sighed loudly, his wings relaxing in relief behind him. He carefully removed his satchel from his shoulders, gently holding it in his arms to not disturb Calypso too much.

“Just have a seat wherever you like- do you need anything?” Techno said, softly shutting the door before running over to the fireplace and striking a match as he continued blabbering on. “Need anything to eat? Or drink? Are your wings okay?”

Tommy chuckled,

“I’m okay, just gonna sit down. I’ve been walking forever.” He walked over to the sofa and sat down, setting the stachel beside him gently. He kicked off his boots before slumping over.

It took a few minutes to fully assure Techno that he was fine until he finally calmed down, plopping down in the chair across from Tommy, hands crossed in his laps awkwardly. A few silent minutes passed before either of them said anything.

“So...uh,” Techno scratched the back of his neck, looking up at the corner of the room, “how are- how have you been?”

Tommy smiled with amusement.

“I’ve been good. Just uh...it’s been awhile.”

“Yeah...it has”

Another beat of awkward silence passed.

Finally, Techno sighed, lowering his head into his hands with a weak chuckle.

“I just-“ he hiccupped, a tired smile on his face, eyes blurred and teary, “I don’t understand- how are-*how*?”

Tommy frowned.

It was now or never.

“I’m guessing you heard about exile...right?...”

Something red shot through Techno’s eyes, deep and fiery and hot. His shoulders went rigid as he gazed at Tommy with anger and pity combined into one miserable heap. He let out a shuddering breath.

“Yes. And I’m so sorry.”

Tommy looked up slowly.

“For- for what?”

Techno looked at Tommy like the boy had just stabbed himself in the heart.

“What do you mean ‘for what?!’ Tommy! You’re- you were just a kid! You didn’t-“ the

hybrid took in another sharp breath, eyes cloudy and wild, “you didn’t deserve any of that.”

Tommy looked away, trying to ignore that deep, locked away part of him that hissed that Techno was lying.

“Tommy,” Techno murmured quietly, looking at the boy with such a soft look, eyes he thought he had never seen before and yet he remembered well, “what did he do to you?”

Tommy winced at the words, turning away from his brother with a quiet breath.

“I...I’m not ready to talk about that yet..it was...a lot. I don’t want to think about it. I just want to forget.”

Techno furrowed his brows, looking down at his lap. He held back an angry growl. What could Dream have done to his little brother to make him like this? His loud, obnoxious little brother that used to be so bright and energetic? How...how could he have let this happen? He sighed.

“O-okay Tommy. That’s alright. You don’t have to talk about anything you don’t want to,” he smiled warmly at the boy, his eyes sad.

Tommy looked up with a quiet smile, grateful.

“Thank you Techno,” he said softly. Techno nodded.

“Well...” Tommy continued, clearing his throat, “I uh, left exile. And then....well you found me here and I ran off,” Techno nodded along awkwardly, “but then I fell uh, into this pond right? I thought I was gonna die,” he chuckled, though there was no humor in his voice. “But, the pond, it led into this kind of- underground cave. And uh- in that cave there was this kind of building, it looked like a prison with all those doors and bars and shit-“

Techno waved his hands in front of him, stopping Tommy.

“Wait wait wait, you mean right out there? In that little pond?”

Tommy chuckled,

“Yup.”

Techno was silent for a bit. He breathed deeply, his voice relieved when he spoke again.

“Well...that’s not what I expected. We really- we thought you drowned in there. A couple of times me and Phil and-...everyone else were tempted to grab some potions and try to find you, but we had no clue if we’d be able to get out. I’m-“ he paused, “I’m so sorry we didn’t try.”

Tommy waved him off with a laugh.

“No, don’t worry about it. I actually think...it was for the best.”

—

Techno listened patiently while Tommy continued with his story, the fire crackling quietly as he carried on.

“—and then after I got out of the library, I walked for a bit longer. And I found this room,”

Tommy frowned, before looking up at his brother with a sly smile.

“Do you remember those stories dad would tell us? About The End?”

Techno looked at him with confusion, raising an eyebrow as he slowly nodded.

“Well, there was a portal in that room, and guess where it fucking led me.”

Techno stared silently, eyebrows furrowed.

Tommy laughed loudly.

“That’s right bitch! It’s real!” Tommy began blabbering about the place, waving his arms around dramatically

“It was beautiful, Tech! Imagine this, floating islands everywhere! And *amazing* forests. There were all kinds of pretty flowers and stuff, and huge trees and-“

“Tommy,” Techno said sternly. They looked at each other quietly for a moment.

“Are- are you feeling okay? Did you hit your head?”

Tommy gasped, his wings fluffing angrily behind him.

“What the fuck?! No I didn’t hit my head!” He argued. Techno stared at him with disbelief, eyes flicking away for a moment.

“Are you sure-? Cause The End isn’t-“

“Yes I’m sure, bitch!”

Tommy crossed his arms, tapping his foot grumpily. Slowly, a cocky grin crept onto his face.

“Want me to prove it? Fine then!” He reached over into his satchel, wrestling with something inside for a moment before he held up the object.

The baby dragon squirmed in his arms with a startled bark, staring wide eyed at Techno.

There was a moment of silence before the piglin hybrid jumped away, almost stumbling over the back of the sofa with how quickly he jerked backward.

His eyes were wide in surprise and disbelief as he stared at the creature in his brother’s arms. It stared back, its tongue sticking out of its mouth. The pup chirped happily.

“Tommy- that’s-“ Techno stammered, “that’s a *dragon*”

Tommy lowered the creature into his arms with a giggle.

“Isn’t he amazing? Techno, this is Calypso. Calypso, Techno,” he gestured to his brother.

Techno stepped closer cautiously, arms held to his chest.

“But that’s impossible!” He said breathlessly. The dragon barked quietly to prove that he was in fact real.

“Wanna hold him?”

Techno nodded eagerly, holding his arms out, his mouth still open slightly in shock. Tommy carefully set Calypso in Techno’s arms. He held the pup awkwardly, staring at it in awe. Calypso stared back, panting playfully.

“When I got there, I found a dragon. She was huge, Techno. And she was sweet and kind. I named her Clementine. That one there is her son,” Tommy chuckled.

Techno laughed along with him, waving his fingers in front of Calypso’s face.

“Only you could befriend a dragon, Tommy,” he grinned, glancing up at Tommy.” They both

chuckled together.

“I just- I can’t believe you actually found The End! That’s- that’s incredible! And not only that, you befriended the Ender dragon! They- they said she terrorized humans!”

“ I thought so too, but the stories lied. She was so kind. She brought me to this city where I stayed. She showed me all kinds of things like- like islands made entirely of crystal and-“

Techno looked up quietly.

“Tommy, did- did you have any way of getting back?”

The boy turned his head away.

“Not really.....but,” he sighed, “that’s...that’s kind of the thing, Tech.” He pulled his knees to his chest, dreading what he was about to say next even though he knew each word of it was true.

“I didn’t-.....” he shuddered, “i was afraid of coming back,

“I didn’t know who to go to. L-last time I saw Phil was when he k-killed Wilbur. Last time I saw Tubbo was when he kicked me out. And the- the last time I saw you was- was the war,” he lowered his voice into a pained whisper, “when you told me to die,”

Techno flinched violently, shaking tears away.

“I’m so sorry Tommy. I’m sorry I was- I was an idiot- and I was angry- you didn’t deserve that,” Techno set Calypso down gently and stood up. He dropped to his knees in front of Tommy, taking his hand. “Every single day since I lost you I’ve thought about that day. I can’t forgive myself, and I don’t expect you to forgive me either, but know that I’m telling the truth when I say that I’m *sorry*”

Tommy sniffled,

“But- but I betrayed you-“

“You were a kid! You were dumb and- and impulsive,” they both chuckled wetly, “ but still, I had no right to say the things I did to you.”

“I’m gonna be honest,” Tommy sighed, “for a bit I- I thought you hated me.”

Techno shook his head with a shaky sigh.

“I could never hate you. None of us could”

He reached forward and pulled Tommy into another hug. Tommy cried into his brother’s shoulder with a shudder, hugging him back tightly.

“Yeah....I think part of me knew that,”

A tiny chirp came from behind Techno, and they turned to see the dragon pup sitting behind him. He jumped onto the couch, scrabbling against the cushion as he pulled himself up, before climbing onto Tommy and Techno’s shoulders. They both laughed fondly.

“We’re family Tommy. No matter what.”

Tommy chuckled quietly. He looked up at Techno, wiping away his tears with the back of his sleeve.

“I know. I know.”

Techno settled onto the couch beside Tommy. The boy wrapped one of his wings around him, and Techno leaned into him, accepting the embrace as naturally as he accepted Phil’s.

“Tell me more about Clementine,” Techno smiled. So Tommy did. He told his brother of the flights they took, the adventures they had, the things they saw, the stories he told the dragon. He included every detail, heart aching with the memories of the dragon and her kind, gentle eyes. Tommy didn’t talk about the day he messaged Wilbur and Drista.

—

By the time Tommy reached their last adventure, the sun was high in the sky, and it was already afternoon.

Techno was listening intently, mouth opened in awe at every word. Calypso listened from his spot in Techno’s lap with just as much fascination as the hybrid, though he’d already heard each story. He still liked to hear about his mother.

Tommy swallowed hard, his heart sinking in his chest with dread as he came to the last few stories. He pushed the empty, hollow feeling away.

“One day...she..she took me somewhere new, way far away from the city. It was this huge island with giant black pillars of obsidian around it. In the center there was a nest, and in it was an egg.”

Calypso purred, his wings fluttering. Tommy gently scratched under the dragon’s ear, trying to distract himself from the sorrow clawing at his heart as he continued.

“She...Clementine was tired from flying, so I- I promised to watch the egg while she took a nap. I sat- sat there for a little bit....but..but then Clem-....” He paused, head dropping to his chest, “she wasn’t breathing.”

Techno gasped softly in understanding. He pulled the boy closer to him with an arm around his shoulder.

“I’m so sorry Tommy,” he whispered. Tommy leaned into him, and Calypso chirped comfortingly, snuggling against his chest.

Tommy could only nod quietly.

“This....this lady showed up. She had huge, black wings and was absolutely stunning. She told me her name was Kristin- and she was there to take Clementine home. She basically was uh- a goddess? She told me about Clementine, how she created her.”

“Eventually, I had to say goodbye. I took the egg with me and....”

He smiled sadly.

“It was beautiful, Tech. Clementine she- she raised up, and then there was just- *light everywhere* . The sky was filled with stars and colors of all kinds. It was just breathtaking,” Tommy sighed in awe, his voice quiet. Techno smiled along with him.

“Kristin pointed out this one star. It was the brightest of all of them. She told me that was Clem”

Techno gasped in sudden recognition.

“Is that what that star is? That’s-that’s Clementine?”

Tommy chuckled fondly,

“You’ve noticed it?”

“How could I not? Gods, Tommy she’s the brightest thing in the whole damn sky!”

They both laughed softly. Tommy sighed.

“Yeah, that’s her then.”

He continued on with his story quietly.

“Kristin told me I had two choices. I could stay there longer to help Calypso, or...or I could go back with the help of a new portal

I just-....gods...

I still wasn’t ready...I’m sorry.”

Techno squeezed Tommy’s shoulder comfortingly.

“It’s okay Tommy, I understand, I mean, you’re talking to the guy that moved all the way out here,” he laughed warmly.

Tommy smiled sadly at Techno before carrying on.

“So...I stayed. I watched the egg for a bit and then sometime after that, it hatched, and I finally got to meet Calypso,”

The dragon pup barked happily at his name, tail wagging behind him. Tommy lightly pat him on the head

“Yep, that’s you, Caly,” he giggled.

“And uhm, I taught him to fly, and sometime after that, I had this dream. Kristin and Clementine were there. Kristin wanted to give me a gift as thanks for taking care of Clementine and Caly, and then when I woke up, I had these,” he held his wings up proudly at his sides

Techno gasped sharply,

“Wait- do you think that’s who Phil got his from? Kristin?”

“I wouldn’t doubt it,” Tommy chuckled.

Techno crossed his arms in mock amusement,

“That man has a lot of explaining to do.” They both laughed together.

“I learned how to use my wings and then I got to show Caly all around the world. It was- it was amazing.”

“But then...about a year after that, the islands began to fall and break. Kristin showed up and she explained that Clementine and The End were connected, so it couldn't hold itself together anymore. She told me it was time to go.

She led me to the island where Clementine passed and....and that was it. I went in. I woke up in the middle of the woods and...and I was back.”

Techno smiled, pulling Tommy into yet another strong hug. He hugged back, smiling softly. “It's good to have you back, Tommy,” Techno whispered softly. Tommy nodded quietly. For a while they sat there in that quiet silence, only the crackling of the fire and a few soft sniffles breaking the air.

“Oh and uh, by the way,” Tommy pulled out of the hug, “you're not allowed to kill endermen anymore. They're my friends now and this is their home.”

Techno chuckled,

“Alright, fine, promise,” he sighed warmly, “Tommy, you have no idea how happy everyone will be to see you again. We've missed you so much.”

“Well, that's- that's good to hear. I know I left on kind of bad terms with everyone but....I can't wait to see them all again..gods, how is Tubbo? How has he been?”

Techno frowned, breaking eye contact.

“I'm gonna be honest....he was a wreck that first couple of years. He was convinced that everything that happened to you was his fault-“

“It's not,” Tommy said sternly. Techno nodded along, already knowing, “it's Dream's.”

Techno growled at just the mention of his name.

“That's why we got rid of that bastard. Haven't seen his face in years but the first time I do I'll kick his teeth in-“

“No.”

Techno sputtered.

“What?”

“No,” Tommy said again,

“Because I will.”

Techno barked with laughter, throwing his arm around Tommy's shoulder.

“Yeah! That's what I like to hear!” They laughed together, the quiet, cozy cottage filled with the sound of the two brothers mending bonds and stitching together torn and frayed fates. The worn fabric of their family was being sewed back, bit by bit, piece by piece, every string crafted with hope of better things to come. The quilt that was their home was messy and covered in a cacophony of colors and patches, but it was what they were.

“Y'know, Phil's coming tomorrow to visit,” Techno said happily. Tommy beamed.

“Really?” Techno nodded and the boy's wings fluttered softly with excitement. “Oh man,

I've missed him so much," He giggled

Bit by bit.

Piece by piece.

They spent the rest of the day walking around in the snow surrounding Techno's cottage. Tommy asked about the new cabin, but Techno replied it was just for extra space. He was introduced to Techno's wolf pack and promptly trampled by the dogs, and then yet again when he met Steve.

"Careful," Techno had laughed, "he's a hugger."

"So are you," Tommy chuckled before being tackled in a hug from the polar bear.

When the sun set, Tommy dragged Techno outside, eagerly pointing at the sky. He showed Techno Clementine's stars, and told him his names for the different constellations.

By the time the day had ended, Tommy was exhausted. Techno lent him some of his pajamas and let him sleep in Phil's room.

"Goodnight," Techno whispered, peeking in through the small crack of the door.

"Goodnight, Tech," Tommy smiled. The piglin hybrid shut the door behind him, the house going quiet and still.

Tommy pulled Calypso closer to him with a soft sigh, the dragon pup murmuring in his sleep.

Tommy fell asleep quietly.

Home.

Bit by bit.

Piece by piece.

You. You. You Are Alive [part 2]

Techno sat quietly on the couch, his fists curled in front of his mouth. He was tapping his foot anxiously in thought. Usually, in the kind of predicament he was in, he would consult the voices, but it only really worked to talk to them when he could speak out loud to hear himself. Otherwise his own voice would get lost and mixed in with the others. However, he couldn't talk out loud at the moment because Tommy was asleep, and he didn't want to wake him. The kid was exhausted, his internal clock thrown off by the days he spent in the complete night of The End.

God, that was weird to say.

The sun shone in through the windows in bright rays of golden light. It was sometime just after sunrise, and all the stars had gone to sleep. Well, except for one. Clementine. The star was still hanging proudly in the sky, though she soon would go for the day too.

Techno was still trying to figure out....everything.

Tommy was...*alive*. It felt so wonderful to say that. He smiled softly, exhaling quietly as he repeated the word over and over again, running it through his mind like silk.

Alive.

Alive

He laughed quietly, setting his head in his hands.

Techno couldn't blame the kid for what he'd done, despite how much his heart ached with the memories of the days after he left.

The times he spent sobbing on the floor of his room, pulling his hair and clawing his arms. The times he spent helping others through their tough nights, knowing exactly what pain they felt.

Days spent taking care of his dad, who didn't have the strength to do it himself. It hurt.

But....It seemed like Tommy had been hurting more.

Techno didn't know what he'd gone through. He didn't know what Dream had done to him. But he knew that he would never let the boy get hurt again.

Alive

Techno still couldn't quite believe Tommy's story, though the proof stood right in front of him. The End, a place of myth, had been Tommy's safe haven for the past seven years. His best friend had been a dragon. He had *wings*

...

And now the shirt Tommy had borrowed from Techno had a giant hole cut in the back.

You win some, you lose some.

Techno huffed, speaking in a whisper.
“You guys knew, didn’t you?”
The voices hesitated, stammering over their words.

*uh-
YEAH LMAO
Don’t get mad!
He needed therapy
Mumza took care of him
THERAPY POG WOO*

Techno sighed,
“I’m not. I’m not mad....And...I guess I know why you didn’t tell me either. He needed time...so uh,” he scratched the back of his head, “thanks.”

*awww the voices cooed, technosoft
Technokind
Brother pog
Dadza?
Wait what
DADZA!
DADZA AND BROTHER POG!*

Techno was startled out of his thoughts by voices coming from the snowy tundra outside. He quickly stood up as the door suddenly swung open.

Phil stepped in, silhouetted by the golden sunlight outside.
He was wearing his robes of red and blue. The feathers on his wings flickered with familiar, mesmerising colors in the light of the shining sun filtering in through the doorway and windows. The emerald earring hanging beside his soft blonde hair twinkled in the light. His gentle blue eyes still sparkled after so many years. His face lit up as he looked at Techno.

“Morning Techno!” the man chirped with a bright grin. Phil reached down to wipe some snow off the heels of his boots, his wings shuffling behind him to take in the heat of the warm cottage. He sighed, glancing out the door one last time before shutting it behind him.

“How have ya been? It’s been, what, a month since I last saw you?”
Techno fiddled with the hem of his shirt, chuckling awkwardly.
“Uh, yeah, I think so...”

“Well,” Phil giggled, “it’s good to see you.” He quietly took off his blue hat, checking to make sure there weren’t any stray snowflakes on it. “I am exhausted!”

Techno grinned back with a nervous laugh.
“Hey uh, Phil, there’s actually-”

“How’s it been goin’? I hope you didn’t get too lonesome without us,” Phil smiled, stepping off to the side to hang his hat on the rack by the door.

“I’ve been fine. But- about that-”

“We didn’t see any sign of him unfortunately,” Phil continued obliviously, “But I think once we go off again me and Wil-”

“Phil!” Techno chuckled loudly. Phil jumped startledly, his wings fluffing up behind him. He laughed with embarrassment.

“Oh, sorry mate! I just kept cutting you off without realizing,” Phil cleared his throat with a smile, “What were you going to say?”

Techno smiled warmly at the man, laughing deeply. He cocked his head to the side, towards the hallway that led to the rooms.

“We have a guest.”

Phil blinked in surprise.

“Oh, we do? Who?”

Techno didn’t respond to the question. He instead turned and walked down the hall.

“They stayed in your room, hope that’s alright.”

“Uh,” Phil hummed, “I guess so, but who-”

Techno quietly held up his hand to signal Phil to wait. He huffed, tapping his foot as he stood impatiently in the living room.

He watched as the man knocked softly on the door to Phil’s room, before quietly opening the door and leaning into the room.

“Hey, c’mon, get up,” Techno said warmly to someone out of Phil’s vision. There was a moment of silence before Techno sighed in mock offense.

“Don’t flip me off, you’re setting a bad example for the kid,” He turned to leave before stopping with a grin, leaning back into the room, “Also Phil’s here.”

There was a loud thud like someone had fallen off the bed. Phil held back a startled laugh.

Techno barked with laughter before quietly shutting the door, “Brush your hair, you look like a mess,” He called as he walked away.

As Techno stepped back into the living room, Phil held his hands out desperately.

“Techno! C’mon, who is it?”

Techno chuckled, tilting his head with a smile.

“Guess you’ll have to wait and see.”

Phil whined impatiently, stamping his foot.

Before he could continue complaining, the door to Phil’s room quietly opened.

Out stepped a man with golden hair, flickering in the light of the sun shining through the windows. His hair was longer, fluffy and soft as it curled around his ears, sticking up in tufts of bedhead. Soft, aged blue eyes gazed back at Phil with a spark he hadn’t seen in years, bright and familiar. He was tall, almost as tall as Techno was by now. There were light scars on his face, old and pale, healed by time. Upon his back were too huge wings, barely as big as Phil’s own. They were a lighter grey than Phil’s, and shimmered with a much more vivid

light, waves of emerald and violet rolling across every feather. They were scattered with white beads of light, like the stars had been taken from the sky and painted onto the soft plumage.

He smiled at Phil. A smile Phil had missed. A smile Phil had thought he'd never see again. A smile that was real.

"Hey Phil," Tommy said softly, his voice barely a whisper.

The house was deafeningly quiet as they stared into each other's eyes. Phil blinked at the figure in front of him as if he expected it to disappear in the wind. But the person stood tall, quietly shifting on his feet.

Phil slowly took a step forward. Lightly shaking his head as he scanned the boy's every feature. He searched his eyes for some lie, some dullness, some hint that this person wasn't really there.

But there it was, that spark of life, that bright shine.

Tommy stood quietly as Phil carefully walked over to him, slow, soft steps as if he thought the boy would turn and bolt as soon as he got close.

But he stayed still as Phil came to stand just in front of him. With a soft, gentle hand, Phil reached forward. He carefully set his hand on Tommy's face, cupping the boy's cheek in his palm. He gently rubbed his finger across Tommy's skin with warm fondness. They stared into each other's eyes, both now blurry with tears. A quiet laugh escaped Phil's lips.

"Look at you..." he sighed breathlessly, tears sliding down his face. Tommy laughed weakly, leaning into his father's hand.

Phil reached forward and pulled Tommy against him, cradling the boy in his arms with a chuckle that sounded more like a sob.

"You're okay," he whispered, running his hands through Tommy's hair, "Gods, you're okay." He leaned back, setting his hands on Tommy's shoulders. "But- but how? I mean-" the avian looked up at Techno, who stood a few feet away, leaning against the door with a fond smile on his face. "Did you-?"

"I didn't need to do anything Phil, he found me first."

Phil breathed again, setting his chin on Tommy's head. The boy clung to him, burying his face in his father's shirt as he only hugged back tighter.

"Tommy," Phil sighed, and the boy couldn't help but let out a weak sob.

Everything was warm, and soft, and safe. Tommy took a deep breath, basking in the comfort as tears rolled down his face.

"Where have you been?" Phil laughed, looking over Tommy again. His eyes stayed on the boy's wings, a startled expression on his face. Tommy looked over his shoulder at the wings, shifting them on his back.

"Oh, yeah, I met Kristin," He chuckled with a flick of his wings, turning back around to face his father. Phil blinked quietly.

"Kristin..." He breathed, "Is that her name?"

Tommy giggled, "Yep."

Phil smiled, running his hands through his boy's hair again, his other hand gently petting the feathers on his back.

“Tommy, Tommy I am-” Phil choked, “I am so sorry.”

“For what?” Tommy chuckled weakly.

“For- For hurting you! I- I wasn’t there for you- and I know I should have been but- I’m so sorry,” Phil breathed shakily, holding the boy tighter against him. “And then- I thought- I thought I’d lost you-”

Tommy sniffled, wiping tears from his face with his sleeve.

“It’s okay, dad. I’m okay. That doesn’t matter anymore, okay? I’m here, I’m alright.”

Phil nodded quietly.

“We’ve missed you all so much,” Phil choked again, smiling at Tommy. The boy nodded.

“I’ve missed you too. I can’t- Gods- I can’t wait to see everyone again! I mean- there’s- there’s Tubbo and- and Ranboo, and Ghostbur and-”

“Ghostbur?” Phil narrowed his eyes curiously.

Tommy nodded, wiping his eyes again.

“I haven’t seen him in forever...”

There was silence

Then Phil gasped sharply, his eyes widening in understanding. He looked over Tommy’s shoulder at Techno, and the man just smiled, eyes glinting mischievously.

Phil stepped away from Tommy, looking around wildly as the boy stared in confusion. He ran to the door, throwing it open and leaning outside. He looked over toward the other cabin and cupped his hand around his mouth, before yelling out.

“Would you hurry up?!” Phil shouted.

An unintelligible voice returned, yelling angrily.

“Steve! Get off him!” Phil shouted, before turning around, shutting the door. He sighed with a laugh, sinking down against the wall.

“He’ll uh-” The man chuckled, “He’ll be here soon.”

Tommy tilted his head to the side, his wings twitching curiously.

“Ghostbur?”

Phil smiled,

“Well-”

He was interrupted by a voice outside. Someone stomped up the stairs onto the porch, and the doorknob turned quickly.

The world seemed to falter as Tommy watched the door swing open. The fire in the hearth felt like it had stopped burning, and the wind had stopped howling. Hearts stopped beating for that moment.

Golden light spilled into the room in ribbons of yellow, silhouetting the figure stepping into the house. His brown, curly hair had gotten longer, covering his circular glasses as he pushed them up on his face. Right across the front of his bangs, the soft brown hair had been bleached white like snow. His burned, beige sweater had been replaced by a red and blue cape, lined with silky fur. Two golden clasps held the cloak around his neck, a shiny chain connecting them as it glinted in the light. He still wore the same brownish red beanie, the hat falling loosely on his head. There was a grey and red belt fashioned around his waist, carrying pouches of different materials. His soft brown eyes still looked the same after so long, crinkling as if he was smiling, even when his expression was quiet.

“Techno, you need to control your bear,” The man began, removing a large guitar case from off his back with a sigh. He hadn’t yet noticed the boy standing awestruck in the middle of

the room.

Tommy's mind was swirling with emotions. Confusion, sadness, longing, happiness. His heart ached as he stared at the man standing before him, opaque and real and *alive*.

"I swear, someday Steve's gonna kill me ag-" He set the guitar case leaning against the wall and turned to face his family, his gaze landing on the boy staring at him as if he were a ghost again. His face fell in shock, heart sinking.

Tommy felt the warmth return to him, slinking across his chest as he stared into his brother's eyes, full of life and brightness, and now disbelief and hope. They were real. He was real. Both men slowly took a step forward. They both held up shaky hands, fingers trembling as they reached toward each other.

They both spoke at once, quiet, shaking voices overlapping in a soft chorus. They stepped forward again, crossing the room until slowly they came to stand just in front of each other.

"Tommy-"

"Wilbur-"

"But- we thought you were-"

"Y-you were-"

They both stopped, tears already rolling down their faces. They stared into each other's eyes, soft and kind and loving and familiar and *alive*

They carefully intertwined their fingers, gaze flickering over to their hands. They were warm. They were alive.

Wilbur and Tommy collapsed onto their knees in a tangled hug, sobs raking across their spines as they held onto each other, taking in the scent and the feeling of warmth, listening closely to the beating of hearts and solemn voices. Their arms were tangled around each other, holding the other so tight there was no possible way of them disappearing again.

Neither cared for the tears staining their faces and the clothes.

"How a-are you he-ere?" Tommy hiccuped, face pressed against Wilbur's shoulder as yet another sob tore through him.

"How are *you* here?" Tommy sobbed in a laugh.

"You were, Tommy you-"

Tommy fell against Wilbur, tears streaming down his cheeks as he sniffled. "I didn't- I- I ran away. I'm sorry. I'm so sorry."

"You have nothing to be sorry for, Tommy," Wilbur hiccuped, tugging the boy closer and pulling him into his lap, "You're okay. You're okay and that's all that matters."

Another sob racked across Tommy's spine, his fists clenched around Wilbur's shirt.

"But- I saw- I saw you die. You died, Wil."

Wilbur smiled, running his hands through Tommy's hair.

"I know. I know and I'm sorry. But I'm here now. I'm not gonna leave you again." He leaned back, looking over Tommy's older face and the huge wings upon his back. "You, young man, have a lot of explaining to do," he chuckled through his tears. Tommy nodded with a sad giggle.

"You first. I'm not the one that came back from the dead. You- You actually died though."

Wilbur scratched the back of his neck.

“Yeah, it’s uh- it’s a long story.”

Tommy let out a bark of laughter.

“You, bitchboy, have no idea.”

Phil crossed the room over to his sons, lowering himself to his knees and wrapping his arms around the boys. He wiped his tears away with his sleeve.

“Tommy,” Phil sniffled, “we’re so glad you’re okay.”

Techno settled down next to the group, wrapping his arms around them as well. He wasn’t crying, definitely not. Nope. No sir.

For a few silent moments, they sat there in that huddle of arms and wings, wiping tears from their faces and simply living in the fact that they were all there together.

Finally, Techno reluctantly pulled himself away from the group hug and stood up.

“Well, looks like we’ve got a few things to catch up on. I’ll make some tea.”

Tommy turned sharply, glaring at Techno.

“Absolutely not, I’m not drinking your shit leaf juice. I want hot chocolate.”

The group barked with laughter, Phil and Wilbur holding Tommy just a little tighter. They’d missed him so, his charming air and sharp tongue. They’d missed him. Techno chuckled.

“Alright, fine. I’ll make you hot chocolate.”

You. You. You Are Alive [part 3]

Chapter Summary

Twos- death mention, suicide mention, abuse mention, injury

The small group was all squished onto the couch, with Tommy in the very middle with his and Phil's wings thrown around all of their shoulders. He couldn't seem to pry his family away from his side, not that he wanted to. Tommy felt...well, Tommy felt the best he had in ages. His family, all around him, all together once again. He sipped his hot chocolate with a smile. He set the warm mug down in his lap, taking in a deep breath.

"Alright, so," He turned to Wilbur, his brow furrowed. "You better explain how you're alive."

And god, of course he did. Because this was *Wilbur*. This was his brother, the one that practically raised him. The one that had been by his side. Who he would follow to the end of the world, who he *had* followed to the end of the world. Till the end of his time. This was the brother he'd watched spiral until all that was left was something...something not his brother.

But here he was, bright and happy and missing the dark circles under his eyes and grey dullness in his irises he'd last seen him with. Healthy. Healed. Wilbur.

Wilbur chuckled lightly, scratching the back of his neck. He smiled shyly.

"Well uh, it was ghostbur's idea actually," he grinned sadly.

"Ghostbur?" Tommy's face lit up, sinking at the same time. Oh, what had become of the ghost?

He knew the ghost was only a part of Wilbur but...they'd felt so different in a way. He hoped the ghost had been happy.

"Yep. Apparently he came to Phil and Techno one day, and said they should bring me back, somehow he knew I'd change and he believed I deserved better. He had this old library, you might've been there before...y'know. He found this old journal, it talked about something called a totem of undying. It says it's from some ancient God, and it has- it has the power to bring people back to life."

Tommy stared in awe.

"And- and you got one?"

“Techno and Phil went exploring and found one in a woodland mansion. They brought it to L’manberg and...yeah.”

“They brought you back,” Tommy breathed.

Wilbur smiled sheepishly.

“It wasn’t that painful or anything. Just like...I wasn’t there...then I was. I think it was--- maybe four years after---after you disappeared. Ghostbur--he was happy to go though. He said it was my time to come back, to be with them.” He looked at Tommy through the corner of his eyes, his head lowered sadly.

“Is-Is that okay? That I’m back?” He sighed, “I mean- I was told how nice Ghostbur was- and- and I know I was less than kind before I- I left,” he inhaled shakily.

“I’m so sorry for how I treated you Tommy. You didn’t deserve that. You never could have deserved that. I just--I know I’ve changed but I also know I hurt you so badly I-....I just hope you can forgive me.

Tommy’s eyes widened, breath catching painfully in his throat.

“I do. Wilbur I am- I’m so glad you’re here and- and you’re okay,” Tommy wrapped his arms around Wilbur, burying his face in his coat. Wilbur hugged back, sighing with relief.

“I just- gods Tommy, I’m so- I’m so sorry for how I treated you when I was still here,” he took in a shuddering breath.

“It’s not your fault Wil,” he sniffled.

“That doesn’t mean it was okay. I was- I was awful to you--”

“It doesn’t matter anymore. It’s behind us, okay?”

Tommy pulled away, looking up at Wilbur with teary eyes. Wilbur smiled softly, his own eyes bright with tears.

“How’d you get so grown up?”

Tommy shrugged with a laugh.

“A couple seven years on your own does that to you.”

Wilbur chuckled,

before he suddenly gasped in realization

“Right- I- Tommy, now you have to explain where you’ve been all this time.”

Tommy’s smile slowly slipped away, his eyes darkening and his shoulders falling.

“R-right....where I’ve been...” He hesitated, and the group around him stiffened, recalling the events that took place before---

Before Tommy “died.”

He could feel his heart sinking in his chest, any bravery he had left slinking away to cower in the dark corners, to hide away from what had happened. The Tommy from exile whined in terror, and all he could do to help was extend a wing to his frightened self and promise that everything would be okay.

“Tommy-” Phil said hurriedly, leaning forward to gently rest his hand on his son’s shoulder, his wing coming to wrap around him protectively, “You don’t--you don’t have to talk about it now if you don’t want to. He’s gone, okay? We won’t let anything happen to you.”

Tommy rubbed his face with his sleeve and Techno leaned closer, setting his hand on top of his brother’s with a reassuring squeeze.

“No I-...” Tommy took in a deep, shuddering breath, “I--I’m okay. I can do this.”

And so they sat back, hearts sinking as Tommy drew in another breath, his shoulders shaking as he leaned further into his family. He wrapped his arms around his body, pulling his knees to his chest and lowering his head.

“After--After George’s house burned down---and--and I was e-” he paused on the word, his throat thick with venom and the threat of burning tears, “exiled-... Dream took me away to this- this island.

When we got there--he took away my stuff, and- and destroyed it in front of me.”

He felt the people around him stiffen, hissing through their teeth.

“And then he left me. And he came back the next day and tried to do it again, but I didn’t- I didn’t listen....

And he hit me.”

There. That dreadful twinge of fear that he’d tried so hard to banish, to heal, to hide. But it was still there, and he thought it would never leave. Because it clawed at the sides of his mind and ran rampant in his chest every time he saw the color green or closed his eyes or dreamt. But he could feel it beneath his skin, begging to be saved. He coaxed it forward with a careful hand, warmth and care buzzing on his fingertips as he reached out to the scared boy inside him, whispering promises of better things. The tommy with wings and a healed soul carefully stepped into the shadows and pulled the exiled child forward so he could see his family again. For so long he’d hidden away, but he’d never really.....let it heal. Let the pain be taken away.

It was time.

“It was- It was every single day. He’d show up- he’d hit me when I wouldn’t listen-- or- or I did something wrong or-- or if he was in a bad mood. He’d take away the things I spent *hours*

gathering and blow it to shit right in front of me. Dream he'd-" the child sobbed, tears pouring down his face as the memories flashed violently behind his eyes. Because that's what he was. Sure he was older now, but that scared kid he had been had never truly left. It was just hiding inside him, smiling from the shadows as he watched his better self carry on, "He wouldn't let me eat- and he-- he burnt *me* and he'd hurt me and he'd taunt me and-

He told me everyone hated me. And I-

Sometimes I still believe it."

The healed, older Tommy that he looked like now frowned pitifully, longing to pull the scared child that looked so much like him into his arms and hide him away so no one else could hurt him. His breath was quickening, heart pounding in his ears and his blood running cold and he was back on that damned island, sun burning his skin and freezing rain pelting his flesh and white porcelain masks looking down at him and laughing.

But even beneath the pain, Tommy could feel a sense of warmth stirring in his heart, the warmer, gentler hands of the past reaching out to hug the child. To take him away somewhere safe where he could finally forget all that had happened. The past was there, but a gate of pain held together by sun bleached band aids stood in front of it. And he'd have to burn his hands to get through.

"I did everything wrong- everything! I fucked every goddamn thing up! I- It was all my fault-"

There were arms around him. Not constricting. Not choking. They were warm.

Wilbur and Phil and Techno were holding him close, tears in their eyes as they shuddered, clinging to the boy in front of them.

"It wasn't" Wilbur whispered, his voice thick with tears and anger and sorrow, "It wasn't your fault."

He breathed in and continued, holding tightly to the silver gate with burning hands.

"He told me- he told me everyone knew where I was but they never came. There were a few days that Ranboo came- but he never really knew where he was at first. And Dream forced me to not tell, to keep my mouth shut. I didn't tell him.

I wanted to tell him.

And then it just--it got worse. He did it on purpose--because of *fucking* course he did. He made me rely on him," he gritted his teeth, all poison and hatred and shame pouring from his tongue, "because *he* brought me food and *he* kept me safe and *he* promised he was the only friend I had-" Tommy felt like screaming. He slammed his hands over his ears because he could still hear that damn laughter and silk, soothing words and promises.

Lies.

“And the worst part is I believed him!” Tommy screamed, pulling at his hair as he felt hands come up to stop him from hurting himself, “I believed him because it just made sense! Because I was all alone and he was all I had!”

Tommy could feel himself dwindling. He was slipping off the gate. His hands were numb and his ears were ringing. But still he pushed forward against the searing metal bars.

“And I couldn’t take it anymore,” he lowered his head, going limp against the bodies beside him, tugging him into embraces and running their fingers through his hair and apologizing and crying with him, “I didn’t want to go on.”

“So-” Wilbur was sobbing, eyes red and puffy and tears coating his face, “So you r-ran away?” He sounded hopeful.

Tommy stared ahead quietly, his head leaned against Phil’s chest. Maybe he could go with that, spare them the pain, spare himself the pity.

“And----And I tried to make it stop.

I tried to kill myself.”

The gate gave in, and he pushed past.

Warm, yellow glowing hands took him in their arms, whispering to him that he would be okay. The gate swung shut behind him as he was pulled into the past, the gentle embrace of forgetful bliss. The older Tommy smiled from the other side of the gate, the Present setting a gentle hand on his shoulder as they watched Past carry the no longer scared child away.

Hands grabbing at his sleeves, twisting into the fabric and pulling him close and sobbing and screaming and apologizing. Tommy tried weakly to assure him he was okay, at least, he would be now, but his throat was already thick with tears and tired and raw from screaming. They were all crying, apologizing and begging for forgiveness and for him to not do things he’d long passed.

He needed to get to the good part--the happy ending--so they would stop crying. Please stop crying. He’s okay now, the hurt is gone---right?

“I’m okay--I didn’t--” He choked out, and his wings wrapped themselves around his family.

“I’m sorry- I’m so sorry Tommy-” Techno was crying again. Phil was too. Wilbur was too. They all were. They’d thrown themselves around Tommy, holding him close, wallowing in the fact that he was still there with them and he was alive.

“It’s okay,” He whispered, leaning into them.

“But it’s not!” Phil shouted, “You- You tried-you tried--! And it was- it was our fault!”

“It wasn't,” Tommy shook his head, “it was never your fault, any of you.”

They were still whispering apologies.

Go on The wind breathed from outside the chilled cabin, *Carry on*

Now you must lead them away, past past, to the present

“I- I did run away- finally. I tried to gather weapons but he found out and tried to destroy it all. I got away and- and I just started running.

I ended up in the tundra and- and I found Techno’s house and- I’m sorry I stole from you.”

Techno shuddered, shaking his head.

“You thought- you thought I was gonna hurt you-”

“But it wasn’t your fault.”

Techno choked on a sob.

“I took your things and I ran. And then--then I fell-”

They all seized up.

“We thought you drowned,” Phil sniffled.

Tommy managed a weak smile.

“It’ll take a bit more than that to get rid of me.”

He was silent, leaning into his family as they continued whispering their apologies.

“I--I won’t say you’re all innocent, But--But it’s behind us now.

I’m here. I’m okay.”

It took almost an hour for them to stop crying, and even then they were still sniffing. Tommy waited patiently, wrapped in their arms with his wings thrown around them. He felt lighter, weightless like he had been in the portal, a comfortable darkness surrounding him and the stars whispering softly against his skin. The stress--the burden of carrying all those years of suffering around...It was gone. He was free of it’s shackles, the flashes of Dream he saw in his eyes blurry and the laughter faint, almost nothing. The child had been saved.

“Can I go on?” Tommy asked finally.

Wilbur nodded sadly,

“Ye-” he sniffled “yes. Please.”

Tommy smiled.

Because here, this was where things got better.

“After I fell into the whirlpool, I woke up in a cave. There was this-this voice calling me and I followed it. And suddenly I was in this huge- almost castle like building with this really old stone and- and there were these pathways everywhere and a library-”

“After like- I dunno- an hour of walking around, I finally came to this room. There was this huge- huge circle in the center, made of emerald or something? I’m not sure--and inside of it,” he breathed, “It was like the night sky. This pool of stars and shit! It was- It was so incredible!” Tommy giggled, scratching the back of his neck, “And I uh- may have fallen in.”

His family exchanged confused glances with each other.
Tommy smiled devilishly.

“Phil, do you remember those stories you used to tell us about The End?”

His father raised an eyebrow.

“Uh....Yes?”

Tommy smirked.
“Well you’ll never guess what I found.”

Tommy jumped to his feet, buzzing with excitement, wings fluttering and twitching behind him. He swung his arms out dramatically.

“It was incredible! It was- It was The End! There was nothing but sky and these fuckin’ awesome floating islands and huge trees! It was beautiful! I didn’t think it was real- I mean- that’s what I was told- but it was! And it was great!”

Phil and Wilbur shared a glance at each other, their expressions a mix of disbelief and concern. Techno was sitting back on the sofa with his arms crossed and a smug grin on his face. Phil cleared his throat, crossing his hands in his lap.

“Tommy- Are you sure you didn’t like- imagine that?”

Tommy’s face fell in disbelief.

....

“What the fuck?”

Phil scratched the back of his neck with an unsure hum.
“Tommy- I mean- Y’know those stories weren’t real right? They were all just fairy tales.”

Techno laughed to himself, hiding his face behind his shoulder. Phil and Wilbur glared at him curiously.
Tommy was seething, his wings puffed out angrily.

“How come no one believes me?! I’m telling you the truth!” He squawked. Techno snorted, turning his face away. Tommy stamped his foot, turning his attention back to the other two men on the sofa. He huffed, before his eyes lit up and a cocky smile pulled at his lips.

“Fine,” He hummed quietly, “If ya don’t believe me~”

Tommy raised his fingers to his lips and blew out a sharp whistle. The people sitting on the couch covered their ears in surprise, but Techno was the only one of them laughing.

“Caly!”

And then there was something running down the hall, the sound of something bumping into a wall before a pitch black blur shot into the room. The creature ran straight for the sofa, jumping onto Phil and Wilbur, squirming around excitedly, climbing all over them. Techno and Tommy were screaming with laughter as they watched the other two clamber around wildly in confusion. Calypso was standing on Phil’s chest, covering his face in puppy kisses.

“WHAT THE FUCK-” Phil yelped. The dragon jumped off him, climbing onto Wilbur’s head before jumping down onto his chest, knocking the breath out of the man.

Wilbur and Phil stared wide eyed as the creature scurried off the sofa, flapping its wings excitedly as it ran over to Tommy. Tommy scooped the pup into his arms as it wriggled around.

“That’s-” Phil guffawed, “That’s a dragon!”

“Oh really? I didn’t notice,” Tommy shrugged. Calypso let out a happy bark, squirming out of Tommy’s arms before running back over to the couch and flying up onto Phil’s lap.

“Where did you get a fuckin’ dragon?!” Wilbur yelped, practically climbing over Techno to get away.

“Yeah! You believe me now, don’t ya?” Tommy barked with laughter, not bothering to step in as the dragon pup wriggled around over Phil and Wilbur, “This is Calypso! Son of the Ender Dragon!”

“Son of the WHAT?!”

Tommy finally stepped forward and grabbed Calypso under the arms, pulling the dragon into a hug. He set one hand on his hip, the other cradling the dragon pup. The pup wriggled in his arms. Tommy looked down with a stern but playful glare.

“*Calypso. Behave yourself, young man,*” He grinned, quipping in ender. The pup whined but settled down.

“What-?!” Phil squeaked out with a baffled expression, “What was that?!”

“Ender! I picked it up while I was there!” He laughed, shaking his head, “Now. Will you guys finally let me explain?”

Phil and Wilbur turned to look at each other, mouths open in disbelief, before quietly looking back at Tommy and nodding.

“So, like I was saying, I woke up in the end. I had some ender pearls with me--courtesy of Techno----oh also you’re not allowed to kill endermen anymore cause they’re my friends” He rushed in quickly “---so I used to the pearls to get to the other islands, but then I reached this one really big island, and I was really fuckin tired, so I fell asleep. But when I woke, there was a dragon in front of me!”

Phil and Wilbur seized up. Calypso barked happily.

“Shit-”

“Yeah, shit is what I thought, so I kinda took off after she growled at me, but then I wasn’t lookin where I was goin and I fell aaaaand she saved me!”

Wilbur gawked.

“The- *Ender Dragon* saved you?”

“Yeah!” Tommy grinned, wings fluttering happily behind him, “All those stories about her were lies by the way. She’s super chill. Then we hung out for a bit and she took me to this really cool city and gave me a room and clothes an’ shit. I named her Clementine!”

So the story continued on. Hide and seek. Falling. Flying. Telling her about the stars. They all listened intently as the boy explained, not forgetting a single detail as he paced about the room, swinging his arms wildly for effect and interrupting his own story constantly with something else he and Clementine had done together. The crystal islands. The days spent running wild around the forests. The way she’d wrapped her wings around him comfortingly. He didn’t tell them about the communicator---because he didn’t want to hurt them more---but he saw a knowing glance pass Wilbur’s eyes when he told them about the few moments he was on his own and missed his family. Sitting with her. Calm.

And then he reached their final journey. His family immediately noticed the way his wings slumped behind him. He looked down quietly, cutting his excitement short.

“But uhm....Then one day, Clementine brought me to a new island, where her nest was. She showed me her egg. And then-” Tommy stuttered, “And then she was really tired and....”

Phil gasped softly, shaking his head with pity as understanding settled across him.

“Oh, Tommy...”

The boy wiped his eyes,

“It’s okay. She was old and she’d-she’d lived a long life. An angel came. She was wonderful, She had wings like ours and she uh- she took Clementine with her. But....it was beautiful. It was like- like you’d never seen stars before. She became the stars, and she was- she was incredible.”

“It was a few months later that Calypso finally hatched, and a bit after that I got my wings,” he opened them a little to allow his family to gaze at every feather.

“I had a dream one night and Kristin and Clementine were in it. Kristin thanked me for taking care of Clementine and Calypso.”

“Kristin,” Phil breathed, “her name is Kristin.”

“You- you don’t know her?” Tommy cocked his head to the side.

“I’ll be honest, I don’t- I don’t remember getting my wings. I remember when I was a younger traveller I was going through the nether, and then the next I woke up with wings, and a piglin hybrid and his human brother. They were too young to remember either though.” Techno and Wilbur exchanged a confused glance. Tommy slumped.

“I’m sorry you don’t remember her. She was lovely though. She said I got my wings for helping Clementine, so, maybe you did something to help her,” he smiled softly.

Phil wrung his hands together.

“Wait-do-do you know how to fly yet?” Tommy smiled at him.

“Yeah, I taught myself when Caly fell off the island one time. Sorry you didn’t get to teach me,” His grin fell. But Phil was smiling warmly, eyes crinkled.

“It’s okay. I’m so proud of you, Toms. You’re so grown up.”

Warmth bloomed in his chest.

And then he told them of his years with Caly. Playing the same games he had with Clementine, mapping the stars, naming them, telling the dragon pup stories of the above world, and the pup’s mother.

And then he told him of his final day. Of islands crashing and falling. Of finally accepting that it was his time to go. But he didn’t tell them of the time in the portal, of being the sun and the moon, and the sky and the stars. Because he could never do it justice. It was something unexplainable. It was something for him to keep.

And then he told them of coming home, and they wrapped him in a hug once again, whispering thanks to the ones that had kept their boy safe.

The sun had long since set, leaving the tundra in a calm blue night. The clouds were gone, paving way to a crystal clear sky, speckled with starlight. It was a windless midnight, the arctic silent and gentle.

Tommy stepped out of the cottage onto the porch, followed closely by Wilbur and Calypso at his heels. He kicked some snow aside with his crystal boots, and Caly rushed forward to roll in it. Tommy had changed into his purple waistcoat and pants and poets shirt, now adorning a small blue cape over his shoulders Techno had insisted he wear.

Phil and Techno were inside discussing something. Ever since he'd finally revealed what Dream had done to him, it had been impossible to miss the dark flicker behind his family's eyes, even as they smiled and listened to his happier stories. Phil and Techno had been sat at the dining table the last he'd seen them with maps strewn about around them, marked with angrily scribbled notes and red ink. Wilbur had led him outside after hearing a few frustrated, unfriendly mutters from the other two.

"C'mon, I wanna show you something," Wilbur smiled at Tommy before bounding down the steps into the snow. Tommy giggled and ran down after him, using his wings to make his steps quick and floaty as he glided over to his brother. Calypso barked excitedly, rushing after the two. Wilbur stopped running a bit of a ways, neck craned back to look at the stars.

"It's been so long since we stargazed together," Wilbur said quietly, his breath fogging in the cold crisp air around him. Tommy came to stand by his side, looking up at the sky with wondrous eyes. The stars here were nowhere near as enchanting as they had been in the end, but it was still beautiful all the same, with the white and blue twinkling and the distant flicker of the northern lights. And there was Clementine, always the brightest, illuminating the sky cloaked around her. Caly trilled quietly, his white eyes shining.

"Follow me," Wilbur grinned, and before Tommy could even turn to follow, his brother was racing out into the snow again, turning back toward the house. He ran past the cottage, over to the large cliffside that hung just behind it.

Wilbur began scaling the cliffside, his movements careful and practiced as he climbed further up. He looked down over his shoulder at Tommy, mischievous glee in his eyes.

"What are you waiting for? Hurry up!" He chuckled, turning back to the wall. He seemed sure he'd be first up the wall.

The blonde grinned, looking back. He ruffled his wings. It had taken some time to get used to the cold climate, but he could probably use them a little bit now after how long he'd spent outside with Techno yesterday. He looked down at Calypso, raising an eyebrow.

"Think we can beat him?" He quipped in ender, and the dragon pup barked playfully, crouching down into the snow.

Tommy stepped forward and ran straight for the cliff, using his legs to boost him up into the air. His wings flailed wildly behind him, sending snow scattering on the wind created by his dark starry feathers. He grabbed onto the rock wall, barely managing to find a hold on the stone, before thrusting his wings again. The force carried him up, and he saw just a flicker of Wilbur's surprised look before he'd shot past, scrambling to pull himself up to the top of the hill. Snow fell down as he kicked his feet, heaving upwards before falling into the snow. His lungs burned against the sudden rush and movement and the unfamiliar crisp air. When he finally caught his breath he rolled onto his knees, peering down the edge of the cliff face.

Wilbur stared back at him, his eyes wide and his mouth hung open in shock. He was barely even halfway up the rock. Tommy let out a bark of laughter.

"What are you waiting for? Hurry up, bitch!" Tommy cackled. Wilbur scowled, and continued begrudgingly climbing up after him. Wilbur stopped to look down at Caly, the dragon pup still waiting patiently in the snow.

"Can he fly up?" Wilbur asked with concern. Tommy chuckled and held his arms up.

“Course he can! Watch, Caly!”

And with that there was a purple flash of light, and Calypso appeared in his arms in a flurry of violet smoke, the pup wriggling around excitedly. Wilbur gaped.

“He can teleport?!”

Tommy screamed in laughter yet again.

Tommy grabbed Wilbur’s arm when he was close enough and pulled him up onto the snowy hilltop, both laughing and panting. Wilbur sat down on the snow before falling onto his back. He spread his arms and legs out and began rolling about in the snow. He sat up, shaking snow out of his brown curls.

“Look! Snow angel!” He exclaimed with a laugh. Tommy raised an eyebrow in amusement before turning around and falling into the snow beside Wilbur. He held his wings out widely at his side, barely moving before he stood up. A perfect silhouette of his body and his wings was framed in the snow. He looked over at Wilbur, unimpressed.

“Wow, yours looks like shit,” he remarked. Wilbur growled and grabbed Tommy by the arm, dragging him back down into the cold snow. They both laughed brightly, shoving each other around.

Soon they calmed down and Tommy leaned into Wilbur’s side, resting his head on his brother’s shoulder. They both gazed up at the sky with calm smiles.

“You know what that one is?” Wilbur asked, leaning closer to Tommy and pointing up at a small patch of stars. Tommy squinted at it before nodding.

“That’s Big man.”

Wilbur blinked at him, then turned and looked back at the constellation, then at Tommy again.

“No...” He hummed uncertainly, “That’s ursa major.”

“Big man is a better name.”

Wilbur seemed unimpressed. Baffled.

“Alright then, what’s that one?” He moved to point a little ways below.

“Little dude.”

Wilbur shook his head lightly.

“That’s ursa minor--Did you change all their names?”

Tommy grinned.

“I did. I made them so much better, don’t you agree? I even named the stars themselves. Did you know the stars here are the same as the ones in The End?”

Wilbur chuckled, sitting back on his hands. Luckily he had leather gloves on for the snow.

“Alright, who’s that?”

Tommy began listing off the names of every star Wilbur pointed to. Gary, Gary 2, Bitchboy, grass. Wilbur didn’t understand *why* he would name the stars things like “david” and “Clara” or whatever else he thought of, but Tommy didn’t expect him to. No one could understand his genius.

Finally Wilbur turned and pointed to the brightest star.

“And what about that one?”

Tommy went quiet, his expression softening as he let out a slow exhale.

“That’s...That’s Clementine.”

Wilbur set his hand on his brother’s shoulder comfortingly.

“You named one after her?” Tommy chuckled.

“No, that’s actually her. She appeared there after she died. So, she’s always here with me.” Calypso purred softly, resting his head on Tommy’s knee as he peered up at the sky, quietly watching Clementine.

“Oh,” Wilbur breathed, eyes shining as he watched the star.

Soon he sighed quietly.

“What about the little blue one beside her?”

“That’s---” he stopped, frowning, “I don’t know actually. I tried to name ‘em but, nothing ever seemed to, y’know, fit.”

Wilbur nodded.

“It’s alright. He already has a name,” He said with a soft smile. Tommy looked over curiously.

“What is it?”

Wilbur sighed, his eyes saddened and teary.

“Ghostbur. Kristin told me.”

They sat together for a few minutes more, watching the sky silently. A few stars streaked past, leaving white slashes against the dark cloak of night before fading away.

“What was it like?” Tommy asked silently, lowering his head to not meet Wilbur’s eyes. He didn’t need to say what he meant. They both knew.

“Well. At first it was dark. It was--cold and--so dark. And then it was like someone flipped a switch. I woke up in an empty train station, and no matter where I went it was always the

same. Walk through a door on one side of the station, and you end up right at the other wall, back where you started. I looked for a way out for so long, but--I never found one.

Not long after I kinda--gave up. Time in Limbo--that's what I called it- it moves differently then it does here. Here I was gone for only a year--but there, it was so much longer. I stopped looking for a way out, stopped moving altogether.

And then one day a train pulled in, and a woman stepped off. She was amazing."

"Kristin," Tommy smiled.

"She sat beside me, and she said 'I've finally found you'. And then- she took my hand and said- ...said 'you're not supposed to be here'. And she brought me back with her. But for the longest time, I didn't think I deserved to leave that train station, after everything I'd done. But I was alive again."

"And then...then they told me you were dead. But it's okay cause-you're here now, and everything is okay." He leaned over and wrapped his arms around Tommy, and the boy hugged back.

"Wilbur," he sniffled, "do you think Ghostbur is there? In Limbo?"

"No." Wilbur said definitively, "Kristin promised he wouldn't go there. He'd go somewhere better."

"Did you want to die?" Tommy whispered.

Wilbur was quiet, staring up into the sky with sad eyes. He breathed in calmly, letting go of some unseen burden upon his shoulders.

"I didn't think anyone wanted me to live."

"I'm glad you're back, Wilby," He giggled, leaning against his brother, wrapping a wing around his shoulders.

"I'll never leave you again, Sunshine."

It Dreamed Of Shelter

Chapter Summary

Tw- mention of suicide, mention of abuse

Hey guys

Okay bye

“You sure you have everything you need?”

Tommy rolled his eyes at his father, a soft smile playing on his lips as he closed the flap on his satchel, securing it in place. He threw it over his shoulder and stood up. He was wearing his outfit from The End again, and his colorful flower crown was hanging on his neck. He felt more at home in it.

“I promise. I don’t even need to take that much with me anyway,” he shrugged.

Phil nodded with a hum, but his expression was still strained with worry. Techno stood at his side, looking only slightly less worried. There was still a hint of concern in his eyes, as there always was now. That quiet look hardly ever left his eyes when he looked at Tommy, as if he was worried that at any second something could happen, and he’d be gone again. But he smiled, because while he worried, Tommy was still here in front of him after all these years. Calypso was crouched on top of his shoulders, watching Tommy work curiously with his tail slowly flicking back and forth.

“Don’t worry, Phil, I’m not gonna let him get away this time,” Wilbur chuckled, setting his hand on Tommy’s shoulder and leaning forward with a playful grin. Phil huffed out a laugh.

“I know I know, just—please be careful,”

“I will, promise,” Tommy stepped forward, opening his wings and his arms. Phil accepted the hug, resting his chin on Tommy’s shoulder. He was just a little bit shorter than Tommy now.

When they stepped apart, Techno patted him on the shoulder, “Come back soon kid.” He reached behind Tommy’s back and cloaked something over his shoulders.

A small, red cape with fluffy plush lining was draped over him, sitting comfortably where it didn’t constrict his wings and yet still kept him warm. Techno leaned down and fastened a golden clasp around his neck, careful not to mess up the flowers, before stepping back, looking over the boy with a satisfied nod and a smile. Tommy pulled the fluffy fur closer to his face, nuzzling into the warmth.

“It’s one of mine, but I want you to have it,” Techno scratched the back of his neck awkwardly.

“Thanks, Tech,” Tommy smiled softly. His brother grinned back and opened his arms. Tommy quickly melted into the hug, falling against Techno with a sigh. They stayed like that for a long, lingering moment, before finally they stepped away. Tommy looked over at Wil, who was waiting patiently by the door.

“You ready?” Tommy grinned.

Wilbur nodded, grabbing his own cape from where it hung on the door and throwing it over his shoulders. He grabbed the door handle and pulled it open, stepping aside to let Tommy go first.

Tommy stepped out the front door and into the cold, crisp, morning air. He inhaled deeply, letting his eyes shut for just a moment before opening them again, smiling. The sun was shining down on the snow covered tundra, bathing the sky in a blue and orange silk blanket. Fluffy clouds sat on the horizon, glowing with the sun shining off the cotton tendrils. Clementine’s star hung dimly in the sky, the only star still shining in the light of the sunrise. The wind tousled Tommy’s hair and pulled at his feathers, sending a chill through his wings. He shivered, shaking the feathers out. Wilbur stepped out onto the porch with him, followed closely by Techno and Phil who stood in the doorway. Calypso trotted past them, waddling over to Tommy and rubbing up against his legs with a purr.

“Be careful,” Phil hummed again nervously, offering Tommy a quiet smile. Tommy sighed softly, grinning at his father over his shoulder.

“I’ll be home soon, okay?”

With that he turned away and stepped off the porch, his crystal boots clinking against the frozen ice and snow that rose all the way up to his ankles. Calypso jumped down after him with a delighted bark, racing ahead into the snow, leaving a long crater in his wake.

“Do you want to take the portal?” Wilbur asked. Tommy went quiet, slowly shaking his head.

“No. I’m sorry. I don’t like the nether very much anymore,” He said flatly, looking down at his feet as he walked

Wilbur frowned, nodding slowly.

“It’s okay, we can just take the boat straight to L’manburg then,” He comforted, reaching over to him and rubbing his shoulder. Tommy leaned into him with a sigh. He smiled weakly.

“Yeah...I’d like that.”

As Wilbur and Tommy left, they waved at Phil and Techno over their shoulders, their family still waving at them until they disappeared out of sight, on the frosted horizon and into the evergreen trees.

Wilbur reached into the pocket of his pants and pulled out a purple and silver compass, squinting down at it. He’d explained it was a gift to him from Ghostbur, one of the many items left behind in a small stash for Wilbur to take, along with blue dye and a blue pet sheep named Friend. The red dial on the compass swiveled around before pointing forward. Pointing to L’manburg.

“You nervous?” Wilbur hummed, glancing over at Tommy. The man was walking rigidly, his shoulders hunched and his wings twitching and fluffing up at times as a shiver ran down his spine, but it wasn’t because of the cold.

Tommy wanted to say no. Wanted to say he knew everything would be fine, but he didn’t. He was better, he’d healed, but fear is a dangerous thing. It shapes and corrupts to the point that it can never be truly chased away. A fear of the dark will fade, but it always leaves behind an uncomfortableness, a lingering worry that there truly is something waiting in the shadows. A fear of swimming will be washed away, but even so, the ocean is still dangerous. A fear of hatred will still slink in the dark corners of one’s heart and mind, even when endless love is promised.

“Yes,” Tommy quietly confirmed. Wilbur offered a comforting smile, throwing his arm over his brother’s shoulders.

“They’ll be delighted to see you, Tommy, I promise.”

He forced a nod, trying to quench his fears. It would be fine.

“It’ll be about half an hour till we get there. We’re almost to the boat,” Wilbur hummed.

Tommy took in a deep breath, rustling his wings. He continued walking forward, sticking close to Wilbur’s side. He opened a wing, draping it over Wilbur’s shoulders. The man blinked in surprise before smiling and stepping closer to Tommy, sinking into the warmth provided by his silk and storm cloud feathers. Calypso weaved through their legs, just barely tripping them as he barked and ran around. He trampled through the snow, disappearing under the white canvas before poking his head up a few feet away, covered in frost. Tommy laughed softly watching the pup romp around, eyes shining with delight and curiosity.

They walked through the snow for a long time, sticking close to one another’s side as Caly ran in circles around them, tongue lolling out of his mouth.

Soon, the snow began to fade, an ice covered shore laying in front of them, a large wooden boat rocking back and forth in the small, dark blue waves beyond.

Tommy stopped walking, eyeing the ice warily, but Wilbur continued forward without a care.

“C’mon! Don’t worry, the ice is solid,” Wilbur chuckled, waving for Tommy to follow him.

He waltzed across the ice perfectly, never slipping or sliding on the slippery surface with his arms held out delicately beside him.

Calypso took off after him, unaware of what the ice was capable of. As soon as he stepped off the snow bank and took off running across the ice, his feet slipped out from under him, and he landed flat on his belly with a thump. He spun around a few times, and when he finally stopped his head was swaying dizzily. He shook his head with a grumble, looking up at Tommy before trying to stand back up again. All that happened was he skid around, tripping over his legs.

Tommy snorted, and then began laughing loudly as Calypso scrambled about, trying to pull himself to his feet. Wilbur began laughing too, and the pup barked with annoyance, his tail thrashing wildly behind him.

Tommy chuckled and shakily stepped down off the snow bank, holding his arms and wings out to keep his balance.

“Hold on, Caly. I’ll be right there,” He laughed, taking slow, careful steps across the ice.

He made it a few feet before he lost his grip on the ice. He barely managed to catch himself as he started to slip, wings flailing around wildly. Tommy yelped, and thrashed his wings. The burst of air sent him diving forward. He fell onto his stomach with a grunt, smacking his chin on the ground, and slid straight into Calypso.

Wilbur burst into laughter, laughing so hard he had to crouch down, his hands on his knees. Tommy scowled. He tried to push himself back up, but before he had the chance, Calypso had jumped onto his back, clinging to him for dear life. Tommy fell back down.

He sighed and began flapping his wings, pushing himself on his belly across the ice.

He skid to a stop at Wilbur’s feet, who looked down at him with a cocky grin.

“You need some help?” He asked slyly. Tommy frowned boredly, and held his hand out.

Wilbur helped pull him up onto his feet, keeping his hand on his shoulder to steady him.

Calypso took the opportunity and climbed up onto Tommy’s shoulders, burrowing into the fluffy cape and feathered wings with a purr.

Wilbur helped guide Tommy across the ice over to the boat waiting in the water, steadying him each time he wobbled.

When they reached the boat, Wilbur held Tommy’s hand as he lowered down into the boat, sighing as he sat down.

“Is that the path we have to take every single time?” He groaned, sitting back with a huff.

Calypso jumped off his shoulders and leaned over the side of the boat, looking down at the dark water with bright curiosity shining in his eyes. He poked his claw into it and barked in surprise when the cold water stung him, ducking down into the boat with an annoyed whine. Tommy slid his bag off his arm and set it down in the boat.

Wilbur climbed into the boat with practiced ease, quickly sitting down as the boat rocked back and forth, and then leaned down to grab a double-sided oar from under the seat. He pulled the compass from his pocket again and tossed it to Tommy who stumbled for a moment before catching it.

“Make sure we stay on course,” Wilbur asked and then set the end of the paddle in the water. He pushed away from the ice with a grunt and began paddling. Tommy looked down at the compass and began turning around, watching as the arrow stuck to the same direction. It pointed steadily ahead. He looked out across the water, swallowing hard. Across those somber blue and quiet waves was a home he hadn’t been to in years. Would he even remember it? Would they remember him? And what if they really didn’t want him----

Tommy took a deep breath, turning back to face Wilbur and looking into his auburn eyes for comfort. Wilbur offered him a comforting smile.

As they continued rowing, the cold chill suddenly vanished. The dark blue water faded into a lighter color, just barely standing out against the sky. Tommy sighed, tilting his head back as the sun shone down onto his skin, warm wind pulling at his hair and his feathers and making

his eyes water. He stretched his wings out behind him and laid back in the boat, letting the sun soak into his feathers. The light washed over his wings with a shudder, calming the uncomfortable cramp he'd felt in them being in the cold. He hadn't felt the natural warmth of the sun in so long. Sure the fire in Techno's cabin had been warm, but it was nothing compared to the comforting glow of the sunshine. Even though he'd been in the overworld for three days now, he couldn't seem to get over it. Calypso let out a trill as they rowed away from the cold tundra, unfamiliar with the bright, sunny warmth. Wilbur chuckled at the two of them.

"Does that feel good?" He giggled, cocking a brow. Tommy nodded with a smile and a happy hum, stretching his wings again. He sat up quickly and shakily stood up, holding his wings out for balance as the boat swayed. Wilbur made a confused noise, "Whaaat are you doing?"

Tommy grinned cockily at his brother, shaking out his wings.

And then he thrust them down, shooting into the air as the ocean rippled beneath him, sending up a spray of water on the wind.

Tommy whooped as he flapped his wings, letting the wind comb through his hair and glide between his feathers. He flew up, and up, and up, before stopping, gently pulling his wings against his back. The sun practically enveloped him. For just a moment he was weightless, floating in the air, almost like the sky was holding him up, before he fell again, basking in the familiar, exhilarating, sinking feeling that came with.

He turned over as he fell, smiling down at Wilbur. His brother was gaping, eyes wide in surprise. They widened even more as Tommy hurtled down toward him. He pulled his arms and wings closer to his body, careening head first down, heading straight for Wilbur.

Just before they collided, Wilbur throwing his arms over his head, Tommy snapped his wings open. He flew past Wilbur with a sharp *whoosh*, the wind tangling in Wilbur's curls. Wilbur spun around, wobbling in the boat as he tried his best to keep his eyes on the blurred shape of his brother flying past. Calypso let out a delighted bark and jumped out of the boat before Wilbur had the chance to grab him, quickly flapping his wings and taking off after Tommy.

Wilbur's bewildered expression melted into giddy excitement. He laughed, eyes shining as he watched the two flip and spin over the waves. Tommy dove so close to the water that the tip of his wing sliced through it, sending up a spray of water behind him. Calypso nipped at the water with a happy growl.

Wilbur shook his head with a laugh and continued rowing the boat, now able to move significantly faster with Tommy and Calypso flying overhead.

Tommy flew over to sail beside the boat. He angled his wings to catch a draft skidding along the waves, hovering in the air beside Wilbur. He lightly flapped his wings to stay up, grinning.

"You're just showing off now, aren't you?" Wilbur scoffed with a smile. Tommy tilted his chin up proudly, before thrusting his wings behind him and taking off again, Calypso flying after him.

For maybe twenty more minutes they went like that, Wilbur rowing the boat, and Tommy and Calypso diving and flipping in circles around him, never straying too far. Finally, Tommy angled his wings and dove back down. He landed in the boat with a loud thump. Wilbur yelped as the boat tipped forward, grabbing the sides. Tommy sat back down and the boat righted itself. He pulled his wings against his back with a sigh.

“How much longer?” He asked, leaning down to pick up the compass to check they were still on the right path. Sure enough the needle stayed in place, facing the direction in which they were rowing. Calypso soon flew down and settled onto Tommy’s shoulders with a chirp.

“Just a few more minutes now,” Wilbur grinned back at him.

Tommy smiled, but an uncomfortable shiver ran through him. Nervousness coiled in his chest, mind racing through every possible outcome of what the day could bring. He set the compass down again, biting his lip.

“Are they gonna recognise me?” He asked quietly with a shaky smile.

Wilbur hummed, a frown tugging at his lips.

“I don’t think so, Toms. Not at first. You’ve... Well you’ve changed a lot. I’m pretty sure they’ve all just... They think you’re *gone* gone.”

Tommy nodded, lowering his head. He leaned his elbow on the side of the boat and looked out across the water.

“I know...”

“But-But they haven’t forgotten you!” Wilbur rushed in quickly, “No no no, never. They just--don’t expect to see you. That’s all!”

Tommy laughed lightly at Wilbur’s disparity to explain,

“Okay, yeah, I guess that makes sense,” he shrugged. The man sighed, not turning to face Wilbur. But he could still read him like an open book.

“They miss you, Tommy.”

He nodded quietly, saying nothing.

“They care about you. We all do.”

“...”

“We don’t hate you, and we never have. We aren’t mad at you. You did what you needed to keep yourself safe, okay?”

“You promise?” he asked softly.

“Yes, Yes. Forever.”

Tommy sighed. He reached over the side of the boat and let his hand graze the water.

“Okay...”

“Are you sure you’re ready?” Wilbur leaned forward with a gentle look, eyes shining with concern.

“I am. I...I miss them too.”

Wilbur smiled softly.

“Good, cause we’re here.”

Tommy blinked in surprise, glancing over at Wilbur. He turned sharply to look over his shoulder, gasping.

A city loomed on the horizon, fading out of the fog as they rowed closer and closer. Tommy stood up, ignoring Wilbur’s protest when the boat swayed. He scrambled to the edge, gaping at the city. Towering buildings greeted him, some he recognized, and some he’d never seen in his life. L’manburg had been fully built again, no sign of its rubble form he had known in sight. The buildings were decked in flora, flowers of all kinds and snaking vines running through the brick and wooden pathways. Flags and streamers were strewn around the docks and bridges and porches of little houses, most Tommy didn’t even know the meaning of. But still the blue, white, and red flag adorned with x’s hung the highest, waving delicately in the wind. The city stretched on and on and on.

Tommy laughed breathlessly, and he didn’t even attempt to stop the tears that soon clouded his eyes.

“L’manburg” He said, voice trembling with awe, with quiet familiarity and recognition. With gentle longing. Wilbur smiled and began rowing faster.

Soon the boat pulled up alongside one of the docks, and Tommy scrambled onto the wooden planks with his wings fluttering behind him. Calypso barked and jumped out after him, panting excitedly. But even once he was out of the boat, he didn’t move any further. He stood in place, eyes shining, heavy breaths rocking his chest. He wanted to run through the streets and scream and cry happy tears. But so many emotions kept him rooted there, bright tears like jewels slipping down his face, laughter that sounded more like sobs pouring from his lips.

Soon Wilbur got out of the boat, grabbing the bag Tommy had left behind and putting the compass in it. He tied a rope to the boat and secured it in place on one of the dock pillars before walking over to Tommy, setting his hand on his shoulder.

“You’re home again,” He said wistfully, tugging Tommy into a side hug. He nodded with a sniffle, clumsily wiping at his eyes with his sleeves. With that, Wilbur gently pulled him forward. “C’mon,” Calypso chirped and ran up to Wilbur. Wilbur leaned down for a moment and opened the bag for the tiny dragon. He jumped up and scrambled into the bag, peeking out of the flap.

They walked side by side, leaning on each other’s shoulders until they’d left the docks. Tommy marveled at everything, even the simple wooden path they walked over. It was worn by so many years, parts of the wood crumbling, but it was still so nice. So homey.

Just over a hill on the far side of the docks was Tommy’s holiday home.

Tommy tried his best to hold back every sob that tore at his throat, sniffing. Wilbur held him the entire time as they walked, rubbing soothing circles into the space between his wings with gentle murmurs as he pointed out passing buildings.

As they walked, soon entering the main square where a large stage was set, a voice broke the quietness. Tommy froze in place, eyes widening. Someone else. There was someone else here. He turned his head up, looking up at the stage sitting just a little ways away.

Sitting with their back to them was a man with bright orange fur and pointed fox ears, a bushy tail swaying back and forth behind him. He was humming, not seeming to notice the two that were walking towards him. He had a woven basket sitting next to him with a red blanket tucked under the handles.

“Fundy...” Tommy whispered. Wilbur inhaled sharply.

“Oh shit-” He muttered, raking his fingers through his hair. Tommy raised a brow at him. “W-what? What’s wrong?”

Wilbur groaned,

“Ugh- I completely forgot, we planned to have a picnic today...”

Tommy blinked curiously, and then a tiny grin tugged at his lips.

Tommy had known Fundy since he was just a kit, a kit who hated dresses and loved fishing. Wilbur had found him around the same time L’manburg began, and even though Tommy was much older than him, soon the fox hybrid came to be what seemed like a few years older. Tommy still insisted that he was his uncle, even when the fox had been taller than him. (Not anymore.) He was loud and a prankster, always getting into wars with Tommy and Tubbo, playing tricks everywhere he went. They were closer back when their country first started.

Fundy was a lot quieter after Wilbur made Tubbo president. After he drove himself mad and got himself killed. He hardly spoke to Tommy after.

But even still, he’d tried to---to keep Tommy there with him, debating with Tubbo for hours, trying to sway his mind. To defy Dream. To find another way. He had seen Fundy’s saddened, fearful eyes as Dream dragged him away. He could hear Fundy screaming at Tubbo desperately until they sailed away, the hybrids pleas melting in the wind.

“Then go, have your picnic,” Tommy smiled softly. Wilbur turned to look at him bewilderedly.

“What?”

“Wil, I’m delighted you two are hanging out. Do you know how happy that makes me? Go, have your picnic, I don’t want to interrupt you two.”

Wilbur blinked.

“But---what about you?”

Tommy shrugged, glancing at Fundy. He still hadn't noticed they were there.
"I'll be fine, there's still a lot of people I've gotta see, yeah?"

Wilbur frowned, nodding.

"Okay---but you're still saying hi. He'd kill you if you didn't let him know you weren't dead."

Tommy laughed softly,

"Of course! I'd love to see my little nephew!"

So with that they turned and made their way up onto the stage. Wilbur passed the bag with Calypso in it to Tommy, who gently put it over his shoulder.

As they walked up, Fundy finally noticed their presence, whipping around to face them. He was sitting with his legs dangle over the stage, but he quickly stood up as they walked closer, a toothy smile on his face. Much more of his fur had turned white, some around his nose and eyebrows and ears.

"Dad!" He grinned, tail swishing behind him. Wilbur opened his arms and jogged forward, wrapping Fundy in a hug. He ruffled the fur on the top of his head with a laugh.

"Fundy!!! There's my little champion!" Wilbur chuckled. Fundy laughed along with him, pinching his eyes shut

It was so—*fulfilling* to see. They used to be this close, before the wars and all, but now they were back together again. They were happy.

Was it because he was gone?

Tommy shook the thought away.

Finally, Fundy turned to Tommy, ears tilting to the side curiously. He blinked, glancing up and down at the stranger.

"Oh, hey. I don't believe we've met!" He quickly smiled.

Tommy winced a little at the pain that tugged at his heart, but quickly recovered. It was only fair he didn't recognize him. he still believed he was dead. And he was older now, taller, brighter, and with shimmering wings adorned on his back.
He smiled with amusement, sighing quietly.

And of course, though he'd changed, he was still forever Tommy.

"How 'do, fish boy?"

Fundy blinked, scoffing with a laugh.

Tommy watched as Fundy processed the name, expression slipping. His tail stopped swishing, and his mouth slowly fell open, eyes unreadable as he stared deadpanned at the man standing in front of him.

"I...Huh?" He stammered, blinking a couple times as he tilted his head to the side. Tommy laughed again. He opened his arms just a little and stepped forward.

“How’s my favorite nephew?” Tommy grinned. God, Fundy hated being called that. Sure it was true, technically he was Tommy’s nephew, but being taller, and practically older, he despised it.

Fundy inhaled with a shudder, searching the man in front of him’s eyes for an answer. An explanation. Anything.

“Oh...Oh—What the fuck-?” He stammered, stepping forward. He had to tilt his head just a little more up to look Tommy in the eyes. He tried to step forward, but the hybrid was hesitant, frozen in place, too afraid to move.

So Tommy did instead.

He walked up to Fundy and threw his arms around him, cradling the fox in his wings. Fundy’s shoulders went rigid, the man inhaling sharply, but soon he slowly melted into the embrace with a whine. He hugged Tommy back as his tail began to swish again, uncontrollable happy whines pouring out of him.

“There’s no fucking w-way-“ Fundy wheezed out, his ears slowly swivelling back. He was trembling, unable to hold himself still with the thrashing of his tail. “T-Tommy?”

He smiled.

“I missed ya, Fundy.”

Fundy choked on a sob, burying his head in Tommy's shoulder.

“I—*How?*” he whimpered, leaning back, “We thought you were—you—You’ve been gone for so long!” He hiccuped. Tommy smiled sadly.

“I know. I know. I’m sorry, I just needed to get away for a bit. I’m back though. I’m not going anywhere.”

“I can’t believe you’re—It’s really you!” Fundy laughed, wiping his eyes, “You’ve got fucking wings, man!”

Tommy shuffled his wings, looking over his shoulder at them with a chuckle.

“Yeah, I kinda befriended a god? Again?”

“Holy shit man,” Fundy shook his head with disbelief, “Does—“ he stopped, eyes going wide, “Oh gods, who else knows?”

“I just got back a couple of days ago, this is my first time in L’manburg,” Tommy explained, “Only Techno, Phil, and Wilbur know I’m here.”

Fundy smiled brightly.

“You- Oh gods! There’s so many people you need to see!” He looked around wildly. “I mean, just wait till Tubbo--and and Quackity-!” He gasped sharply, grabbing Tommy by the shoulders, “You have to meet Yogurt!” He grinned widely.

Tommy tilted his head curiously.

“Who’s Yogurt?” he laughed softly.

“My son!” Fundy exclaimed proudly.

Tommy blinked in surprise as the words registered.

“You-...” He swallowed hard, smile growing brighter, “You have a son?!”

“Yes! Yes!” Fundy panted happily, bouncing back and forth from paw to paw with his tail waving ecstatically behind him. “I adopted him! He’s a fox like me!”

Tommy wrapped his nephew in a hug again with a hearty gasp,

“That’s amazing! I can’t wait to meet him!”

Fundy nodded,

“He’s-” he paused with a quiet gasp, “Oh, he’s waiting back home. I told him we were having a picnic today-”

“And you’re still going to,” Tommy interrupted. Fundy stammered defensively,

“What?! But- but---what about you man?” He whined, glancing over at Wilbur, who gently set a hand on his shoulder. Tommy smiled warmly, looking away quietly.

“There’s...There’s a few people I have to see...by myself,” He said it so quietly it was almost a whisper. Fundy blinked, before his eyes softened in understanding. So many more people Tommy still needed to talk to, one’s he just knew would have even more heartbreaking reactions. But they both know who exactly he meant.

“Right. Right,” He nodded, “You probably need some time alone with him. I understand.” He hugged Tommy again, wrapping his tail around Tommy’s legs and resting his chin on his shoulder, “It’s just...I’m so happy you’re okay. Never fucking do that again.”

Tommy chuckled softly, reaching up to ruffle the fox’s fur on top of his head.

“I’m not going anywhere, I’m here to stay.”

Fundy hugged him yet again, and Tommy moved his wings forward to wrap around the hybrid once more, pulling him into a careful embrace. “You should probably go see him now,” he sniffled, “Promise me you’ll come see me soon, okay?”

Tommy patted Fundy on the back, taking a moment to close his eyes and relax in Fundy’s arms before carefully stepping back, taking Fundy’s paws in his hands.

“I promise,” the man smiled, squeezing his paws.

When they stepped apart, Wilbur quietly walked up to Tommy, leaning in close to whisper to him.

“Are you sure you’ll be alright on your own?” He asked softly, resting his hand on his shoulder. Tommy stayed quiet for a moment in thought before nodding with a reassuring smile.

“I’ll be alright. Go have fun, will ya?”

Wilbur stood there for a moment more, searching Tommy’s eyes with a concerned frown before finally his expression softened. He reached up and ruffled Tommy’s curls.

“Alright, I’ll see you soon, Toms. Stay safe.”

Tommy watched with a smile as Wilbur threw his arm around Fundy’s shoulders and pulled his son into a hug, a satisfied warmth blooming in his chest. As they walked away, Fundy looked back at Tommy and waved with a soft smile that Tommy soon returned.

He sighed when the two figures finally disappeared around a corner, letting his shoulders slump as he let out a breath he wasn’t aware he’d been holding. It’s not that he was afraid of Fundy, but nerves still crept uncomfortably under his skin. Just because of...everything. But he shook his head to clear his thoughts and put his hands on his shoulders with a confident smile, looking around.

As Tommy looked around, searching, he was now realizing his problem. He had no clue where to find anyone.

Tommy glanced down as a chirp came from his bag. Calypso was looking up at him with concern. Tommy smiled and reached to pet his head, the dragon purring and leaning into his hands. His nerves calmed down a little bit.

“You wanna go meet some more people?” he quipped in ender. Calypso barked happily, his tail thumping around in the bag. Tommy glanced around. Although a lot of L’manburg had changed, there were still a few landmarks he recognized. Tommy picked a path and started walking, his destination already in mind.

The wind tugged at his hair and feathers as he walked with Calypso curiously peeking out of his satchel, chirping curiously. At one point a small, yellow butterfly fluttered around them, intrigued by the flowers hanging around Tommy’s neck, before quickly veering away when Caly playfully snapped at it with a delighted bark.

Tommy marvelled at every sight as he walked, structures new and old, spinning around every now and then to wallow in the serenity of everything at once.

Finally he turned a corner on the path and reached a familiar, wooden walkway, stretching on for almost miles. The grass had grown up around the sides, yet it still looked cared for.

Tommy took a deep breath as he continued down the prime path.

He walked for a few more minutes before it finally came into view. A bench resting on the overhang of a cliff, a large tree casting a soft shadow over it. A jukebox sat beside it, waiting patiently for another song to grace it. Tommy pursed his lips as his heart ached, picking up the pace.

He ran up to the bench, slowing to a stop when he reached it. His hands trembled as he stepped closer.

It was their bench. It was Tommy and Tubbo’s and after a little while it had even become Ranboo’s. It’s where they would sit when they needed to think, where they sat happily after finally claiming L’manburg as it’s own nation. It’s where they would spend the day

sometimes just letting their eyes slip closed as they let the soft shadows and the light slipping through the canopy of leaves above rest on their faces, a tune playing through the record player.

Tommy gently set his hand on the bark of the wood as he walked forward, then ran his hands over the wooden bench. It was worn, stained by sunshine and rain, tiny vines creeping up its legs, but he didn't mind. It looked peaceful. He leaned down, walking around to the back of the bench, running his hands over a message carved into the wood.

"Tommy's bench."

The man smiled softly, ignoring the tears that pressed against his eyes. He sighed and stood back up, turning around to step back onto the prime path, when he suddenly remembered just where the bench sat.

Across the wooden pathway was a small hill, a path of stepping stones leading up to the wooden door that he always had to duck under to even go in. Tommy gasped, all the air escaping his lungs as his heart wrenched.

It was his home. *His*. He remembered taking so long to make it feel like something of his own. He'd spent hours mining out the dirt and rock, carving the stone until it was smooth and decorating the walls before sticking a tiny wooden door in the side of the hill. He let moss and vines grow over it, never bothering to take it down when tiny mushrooms and flowers began to appear both inside and outside the house. He'd sit in the grass for hours, laying on his back with his friends as they watched clouds roll over them.

A field of flowers had grown over the hill. Not an inch of grass was visible with the cotton balls of colors covering it like a floral blanket. Red tulips and yellow roses and white lily of the valleys swayed gently back and forth on the cool breeze rippling past. Tiny bumble bees flew lazily from flower to flower, and a few dandelions had been jostled by the breeze, sending tiny white tufts dancing over the garden. The whole briar seemed to glow in the sun rays sparkling down upon it, setting every bud beautifully alight in golden. In the middle of it all stood a flower, one unlike any of the rest. It was a soft lavender purple with lace ruffles for petals. An allium.

Sitting among those hundreds of flowers, ducked down right beside the allium was a tall man. His suit had been swapped out for a lacey poet's shirt and dark purple, flowy leggings. A pair of gardeners gloves were on his hands, stained with dirt. He held a tin watering can.

His face was more scarred than Tommy remembered, thick lines like permanent tears etched into his black and white skin. His heart twinged painfully look at the enderhybrid's bruised skin. But he was smiling as he worked, humming sweetly while letting a small shower of water fall over the allium like tiny jewels glowing amid the sun. His black and white hair was tied back in a long ponytail, a floppy yellow sun hat with a green ribbon tied around it sitting on his head. He was taller now too, something Tommy didn't know was possible. His tail flicked slowly behind him contently.

His smile never faltered as he set the watering can down beside him, gently moving aside the flowering buds to not crush them.

Tommy blinked, eyes wide and mouth hung open, a small, shaky breath falling past his lips. A tear slipped down his face, and he let it fall before quietly reaching up to wipe it away, smiling softly.

Ranboo.

It Was Alive, Those Thousand Deaths Had Not Been Real

Chapter Summary

Twos - mentions of abuse, mentions of death

Tommy was frozen in place, watching as Ranboo delicately worked, pulling shears from his pocket and gently snipping off dying leaves on some of the flowers to keep the decay from spreading. He hadn't yet noticed the winged figure staring at him from the path in awe, instead still humming and swaying his head to the tune with a soft, content smile.

He looked so happy, and so young though he was clearly much older, and yet a sad look still waded across his eyes as he tended to the flowers with practiced care.

Ranboo and Tommy hadn't been that close when the hybrid first came to the server. At first Tommy had thought the boy was strange, too quiet and antsy, and he hung out with Tubbo far too much for his liking, almost always stealing him away. He hardly saw Tubbo ever, what with his presidential duties and running around with the ender hybrid. He didn't mind that Tubbo had someone to have fun with, he just wished that someone had been him. But then, one day the two had run into each other at the nether hub, and the hybrid had sheepishly handed him an allium, all nervous smiles and shy laughter. Tommy had stared at and thought about the allium for almost hours, and when it confused him enough, he looked it up in Ghostbur's library. A book on botany revealed its meaning. A flower representing the proposal of friendship. That was when Tommy realized Ranboo might not be half that bad. Just a little awkward maybe. But he was funny too, passing off jokes when he began to feel comfortable.

That's why he hadn't told anyone he'd been there at George's house when it burned. He never told anyone that Ranboo had been the one to trip over the lantern and set the flames loose. They'd never intended for the home to burn down. Even as he'd stood there, watching as Tommy was interrogated with fearful eyes, trying to speak up, Tommy had locked eyes with him and shaken his head before telling the others he was alone. He acted by himself.

Ranboo stood up, watching his steps as he carefully tiptoed through the flowers, never crushing a single one as he delicately moved through them like he'd done it every day of his life. He walked along the stepping stones when he reached them, and walked to the edge of the yard that was more of a garden now. He rubbed his gloves together, shaking off dust and dirt before putting his hands on his hips, proudly surveying his work. He stayed there quietly, tilting his head at the garden with a prideful smile.

A soft, warm feeling curled in Tommy's chest again, sending sprites of fuzzy happiness through his entirety. Tears welled up in his eyes again and again despite how he willed them away. His wings twitched and he wanted to run and soar over to the boy, to collapse in his arms and thank him for the garden.

A quiet chirp came from Tommy's side, and he looked down to see Calypso peeking out of the bag. Tommy smiled and held one finger up to his lips, cocking his head toward the hybrid standing in the distance. Calypso nodded with a playful, toothy smile and slipped back into the satchel.

With a mischief ridden smile, Tommy walked quietly up to Ranboo's side, walking just out of his peripheral vision. Ranboo never noticed him approaching, only sighing wistfully while still looking out at the flowers. He was too busy admiring a bumble bee lazily buzzing around the yard, finally settling on the allium, to notice the boy sneaking up to him. Tommy kept his footsteps light as he came up behind the enderman. As soon as he was as close as he could get without Ranboo noticing him, he spoke, grinning.

"What's this?"

There was a sharp yelp, and a *vwoop* sound followed by a burst of purple particles as Ranboo jumped to the side.

Tommy blinked in shock, with Ranboo staring at him with a matching expression of surprise. He'd just--He'd teleported. After spending so long with the Endermen the sound and the purple smoke and vwoop that came with teleportation was practically ingrained in his head. Tommy was fairly certain he hadn't been able to do that last time they met.

Ranboo blinked at the stranger in surprise, eyes locked on Tommy's face while holding his breath. He stared down at the man in front of him, and Tommy watched as his expression shifted, like he was seeing something for the first time, but knowing deep down somewhere in his mind and his heart he'd known them before. He glanced over the man's shoulder, and his eyes widened as his gaze flickered over Tommy's wings. He stared at the man for a few seconds more with his mouth agape before finally letting out an unsteady breath and a shaky chuckle, scratching the back of his head.

"Oh gods- sorry for that, you just snuck up on me," he grinned shyly, tail swaying loosely behind him. He was still as awkward and uneasy as Tommy had remembered him to be. The hybrid looked down at Tommy, cocking his head to the side, "Are-Are you new here? I don't think we've met before."

Tommy held back a grimace at the way those words made his heart sink, fixing his face in a calm smile,

"No, I just got here actually," Tommy said lightly. Ranboo nodded, his eyes flickering over Tommy's wings again, entranced in the way the sunlight lit the starlight dusting the feathers.

"Are you---Do you by any chance know Phil?" he asked hesitantly, "I've just-I don't think I've ever met someone with wings before other than him."

Tommy chuckled deeply, shrugging his shoulders,

"Yeah, we know each other a bit," he turned his head to look back out at the garden, quickly

changing the subject, "So what's all this about?" he asked again, even though he knew exactly what it stood for. Why the flowers had been coated over his grassy hill house. He even knew what the single allium meant.

Ranboo followed his gaze to the house adorned with flowers, humming. He cleared his throat awkwardly.

"Oh, it's--It's this memorial...For a friend we lost," He murmured, voice growing quiet as he looked down at his feet, his smile fading. Tommy pursed his lips.

"I'm so sorry," He said sadly. It felt weird offering condolences for someone that wasn't dead, especially when that someone was him.

Ranboo bowed his head with a nod,

"Thank you," he simpered quietly. He looked back out at the garden again, allowing a small smile to slip onto his lips that warmed Tommy's heart, a relieved sigh coming from him as Ranboo continued. "His name was Tommy. He--He really helped us all a lot."

"I'm....I'm sure he appreciates it."

Ranboo shrugged half-heartedly,

"I'd hope so."

"What happened to him?"

Ranboo's expression darkened again, the warmth in Tommy's chest fading with it.

"He..." Ranboo stuttered, "Bad things... We weren't paying attention to him and..he..."

Ranboo pursed his lips together, inhaling deeply, "drowned...It was...It was our fault." He wasn't quite sure why he was spilling all of this to a stranger, but the words flowed steadily as his heart itself poured out in front of him.

Tommy hissed through his teeth, stepping closer and hesitantly reaching for Ranboo.

"No it's not," he shook his head quickly, but Ranboo didn't catch on, didn't understand, didn't notice how strange it was that this man he'd never met could assure him of something so serious.

"It is..." He flicked his tail, "It really is."

Tommy sighed, looking away. He pursed his lips sadly.

"He wouldn't want you to blame yourself. It's not your fault." He looked back up at Ranboo mournfully and gasped quietly. A stray tear sat at the corner of the hybrid's eye, and the man grimaced in pain at it. Tommy stepped even closer, holding a wing out and gently setting it over Ranboo's back. "Don't cry," he whispered, shaking his head, "You're gonna hurt yourself."

Ranboo should've picked up on the words, should've realized that the man in front of him looked far too familiar to just be a stranger, should've realized he wouldn't have known how crying damaged him unless they'd met before, and he'd seen it happen. But too many dark thoughts were clouding his mind. He bowed his head again, and the tear slipped down his face, following the path of scars already etched into his skin.

Tommy reached up to the hybrid and wiped at his cheek with his sleeve, setting his hand on his shoulder and standing on his tippy toes to meet his face. The gentle movement snapped Ranboo out of his solemn trance, the man looking up to finally meet Tommy's eyes. Tommy offered a soft smile.

"He wouldn't want you to cry," Tommy said softly. Ranboo blinked before quietly nodding. His eyes searched Tommy's own, confusion and a hesitant, unsure realization flickering in his expression. "And he doesn't blame you either."

Ranboo stayed still as Tommy continued, taking his hand and wrapping a wing around him before turning his gaze to the floral garden with a warm smile, "And he really likes the flowers as well."

Ranboo stared at him, hardly even blinking in fear of the image of the man in front of him being only a shimmer of a daydream. Of it not being real. He didn't want it to be another hallucination again. Slowly an understanding rolled over him with every move the stranger made, every soft smile and gentle look, sky blue eyes offering a calm reassurance while still holding a swirling mischief and chaos. "That allium is his favorite. He still has his, by the way."

Tommy looked up at Ranboo again, eyes squinting in a smile as tears came to his own eyes once more.

"He still remembers the day you gave it to him. That day in the nether, yeah?"

He's kept it ever since."

A quiet breeze rolled past them, ruffling their hair and pressing cool kisses against their skin. The flowers swayed with the wind as it floated by.

Ranboo said nothing, simply staring down at Tommy in deafening silence. His mouth opened and closed faintly as he struggled for words. Tommy sighed wistfully, and spoke again for him.

"I missed you, Ranboo."

Tommy yelped in surprise as the ground disappeared beneath him, and he was tugged roughly into someone's arms, feet no longer touching the ground. One hand held his head pressed into the crook of Ranboo's neck, the other holding him closely against his chest. Chirps and chitters came from the hybrid as he swayed back and forth with Tommy wrapped tightly in his hug. His tail thrashed behind him wildly, ears twitching happily. He was crying again, but he hardly noticed the faint pain anymore as he gathered the man into his arms.

"Tommy," he whispered with a strained, quiet voice, "Tommy." There was so much more he wanted to say, but the words wouldn't come, all he could manage was desperate whines of the boy's name, choking over his own breath.

Tommy chuckled deeply, leaning against Ranboo as he finally got over the shock of being hugged so suddenly,
“Hey, Boob boy,” he laughed softly. Ranboo sniffled with a chuckle, lightly shaking his head.

“O-of course y-yo-ou still call me tha-at,” he breathed, words choking on a sob again. Tommy wriggled around to free his arm and reached up to wipe Ranboo’s face again so the jewels of tears falling down his cheeks would no longer hurt him. Ranboo leaned into his hand, closing his eyes with a warm purr. He gently lowered Tommy until his feet were touching the ground again and crouched down in front of him. God, Tommy may have grown a bit, but Ranboo probably grew a whole foot, still hovering over Tommy even as he squatted down to try and see him at eye level. He stared into Tommy’s eyes with wonder and disbelief, quietly shaking his head.

“It’s really you-” Ranboo whispered. Tommy nodded sweetly. He was crying again too, wiping at his eyes with the sleeve of his long coat.

“I’m here,” He assured him. Ranboo was still staring at him like he didn’t quite believe it, searching his eyes in case there was a flicker there of something that would make Tommy no longer real again. But he was *here*. He was real and he was solid and he was holding Ranboo’s hands. He could feel him, he could actually see him. He could hear his voice.
“But-” Ranboo stammered, “But *how*? You-You were-” the hybrid hiccuped, lips wobbling as another sob threatened to break his voice. Tommy sniffled.

“I--I’m okay, I promise. I’m-” Tommy inhaled shakily, “And I’m *so...sorry*.”

Ranboo gasped, shaking his head. He pulled Tommy forward into another hug, cradling his friend against him.

“Why a-are *you* sorry?”

“Cause-Cause I left, Ranboo. I never died- I-I ran-” he sobbed, leaning into the boy’s shoulder, “like a *coward*. I was scared- and so I ran away”

“No,” Ranboo whispered, “No, No. You are not a coward.” He inhaled with a shudder, squeezing Tommy even closer as images of porcelain smiles and green cloaks, and bruises all along a young Tommy’s skin, filled his mind darkly. The boy’s terrified eyes when Ranboo had found himself at the place of the boy’s exile, never knowing how he found himself there were haunting, forever ingrained in his head. “You had every right to be scared. I’m so so-orry we let that happen to you.”

Tommy sniffled, pinching his eyes shut at the memories and nodding.

“I’m here now though, k-kay? I promise I’ll never leave you all again.”

Ranboo nodded, a relieved smile on his face as he held Tommy close.

“Where have you *been*?” Ranboo laughed wetly in amazement.

Tommy wiped his eyes with another sniffle, glancing down at his satchel where Calypso was happily hiding. He hesitated for a moment before looking back up at Ranboo.

“I’ll tell you soon, I promise. But first- I- I need to find Tubbo. Do you know where he is?”

Ranboo blinked at him, and his eyes widened. He gasped loudly.

“Tubbo!” He exclaimed, standing up sharply. He began pacing wildly, tangling his claws in his hair. “Yes! We have to find Tubbo! He’ll- He’ll be so happy you’re *here!*”

Tommy’s surprised laughter was cut off as Ranboo quickly grabbed his hand and took off running down the path, dragging Tommy along behind him. The hybrid began rambling with an ecstatic smile.

“I can’t believe you’re actually-” he looked at Tommy over his shoulder as he pulled him down the path, “You’re alive! You’ve got *wings!*”

Tommy laughed sharply and fluttered his wings, showing off the way the feathers sparkled with stars. He flapped them a few times to keep up with Ranboo as they skid down the path.

“Where are we going?” Tommy chuckled. Ranboo was grinning wildly.

“Snowchester! It’s where me and Tubbo live now!”

Tommy blinked, smiling.

“Another country?”

“Yeah-! After you- well you- a lot more countries popped up all over. There’s Kinoko, and Snowchester, Boomerville, L’sandberg. We’ve got places everywhere, but L’manburg is kinda the center of it all, y’know?” Tommy smiled happily as he followed Ranboo, their fingers intertwined.

“That garden is nice,” Tommy thought about the hundreds of flowers laid out around his home, “Did you do all that?”

Ranboo hummed, out of breath as they ran,

“Well---We all kinda work on it together, but it was me and Tubbo’s idea. I just make sure it stays healthy and every now and then people bring flowers by to contribute.” Tommy’s heart ached with warmth, and he found himself blinking away tears again even though he’d already cried so many times today. Ranboo led him down the wooden path, making sharp turns and laughing as he and Tommy stumbled over the planks.

Finally they came up to a beach, and Tommy gaped at the sight before him, panting. A giant stone bridge stretched out across the water, disappearing in the hazy fog floating off the calm waves.

Beside that loomed a building, casting a shadow upon the dark blue waters and sands. It was made completely of obsidian, fortified over and over with the black, unbreakable brick. Tommy shuddered at the very sight of it, inhaling sharply.

“What is-” He asked shakily as they stopped in front of the bridge, “What’s that?” he hesitantly pointed at the massive structure. Ranboo followed his eyes, humming with a huff.

“That’s-That’s the prison. Pandora’s Box. Sam built after...well, y’know.”

Tommy nodded numbly. That entire structure---was made for *Dream*.

“And...Is he in there?” Tommy asked. A quiet hope flickered in his chest.

Ranboo was quiet.

“After we found out what he had done--he got away. No one’s seen him since. I’m so sorry, Tommy.”

The hope sunk, and he clung tighter to Ranboo. Ranboo squeezed his hand back and turned away from the ghastly sight of the empty Pandora, dragging Tommy gently along with him. He stepped onto the bridge and held his hand out to block the sun from his eyes before pointing.

“Just past this bridge is Tubbo and I’s house, c’mon! It’s just a few minutes walk!”

Tommy smiled thankfully and followed Ranboo as he took off jogging across the bridge, eyes set determinedly ahead. Tommy flapped his wings to keep him going so he could run side by side with the hybrid. Ranboo glanced over at him, eyes locking onto his star dusted wings with an amazed smile.

“Can-Can you actually fly?” Ranboo asked giddily. Tommy smiled, eyes sparkling with mischief, and flared his wings out behind him, shooting forward past Ranboo. The man gaped at him as he sped past, laughing.

“Look at you!” He exclaimed as Tommy landed again, slowing down to run beside Ranboo again. They were both panting, out of breath from how long they’d been running, yet their smiles never faltered. Tommy took Ranboo’s hand again and they kept running across the bridge.

Eventually the air grew frigid and colder, pressing sharply against his skin and sending a chill through his feathers. But he hardly noticed. His mind was focused on Tubbo. Tubbo who he hadn’t seen in seven years. Tubbo who he was about to see again, and would be able to hug and never let him go ever again. His mind was spinning. What did he look like? Did he sound different? Would he recognize Tommy? Probably not... But it was okay. Soon they’d all be together again and they’d all be happy and safe. All that would matter would be his family, and all the troubles of the world could fade.

Ranboo wasn’t seemingly bothered by the cold at all, though Tommy will admit that his own teeth were chattering just a bit. He pulled his wings around his shoulders, savoring the warmth his feathers brought.

The bridge was long, but soon the end came into sight. Light snow was falling, coating the bridge and the pine tree covered land waiting past in a fluffy white. As he jogged to the very end of the bridge and stepped off, following Ranboo over a tall hill and into the powdery snow, Tommy tilted his head back and gaped at the sight before him with a gasp.

Before him was a mansion. It had almost hundreds of windows and was made of dark spruce and strong stone bricks. A giant, towering dark oak door with silver handles carved with intricate designs lay before them. The roof and every window ledge was covered in snow, along with the world around it. In the distance Tommy could hear the crash of ice and ocean waves.

Tommy blinked and Ranboo smiled proudly.

“Who the fuck did all this?”

“Our friend, Foolish,” Ranboo quickly explained, leading Tommy through the snow and over to the giant double doors. “I think he showed up after you-uh-left, so you two probably never met. He’s an excellent builder! He made the castle in Kinoko, and his summer home, and a whole bunch of things.” The way Ranboo rambled on, less shy, less hesitant, happier with himself, it made Tommy giddy, chest aching fondly.

“It’s amazing,” Tommy breathed. Ranboo nodded pridefully.

Tommy held his breath as they stepped up onto the porch and he followed Ranboo to the door.

The man paused on the porch. Ranboo turned questioningly, cocking his head to the side.

“Tommy? Are you okay?”

Tommy took a deep breath. He looked down at his feet. He wanted to rush through that door and into Tubbo’s arms. He wanted to cling to the both of them for the rest of his life.

Yet he stayed rooted in place, trembling ever so slightly.

“I’m okay—just—scared I guess.”

Ranboo blinked, stepping away from the door and back over to Tommy. He took Tommy’s other hand and rubbed his knuckles gently.

“What are you scared of?”

“Ranboo, when I was with Dream—he told me all this bullshit—that-that you all hated me and—I know it’s not true. I know it’s not but I can’t get over it,” Tommy hiccuped shakily, hesitantly pulling his hand from Ranboo’s and wiping at his eyes, “it’s stupid-I’m sorry-“

“It’s not. It’s not stupid, Tommy,” Ranboo said firmly, gently, squeezing Tommy’s hand. “We love you. I promise you we do.”

“But-But Boo-“ he breathed, shaking, “Look how well all of you are doing now. Is it because I left? Have I just r-ruined everything by coming back?”

“No, Tommy,” Ranboo shook his head, “You coming back—it’s the best thing that’s ever happened to me, and I *know* it will be for Tubbo too.”

Ranboo gently pulled Tommy closer, tugging him into a hug. Tommy returned it, wrapping his wings around the hybrid. “I’m so sorry for what he did to you. We—we are never going to let you get hurt ever again, I swear it,” Ranboo whispered. Tommy nodded weakly into his chest, a tiny smile slipping onto his lips. “Would you like to go in?”

Tommy looked up at Ranboo, sniffing.

“Y-yeah. Let’s go.”

Ranboo pulled him over to the door and grabbed one of the silver handles and tugged on it. The door creaked as it was opened, and Ranboo stepped aside to let Tommy in first. The man took a deep breath and walked forward.

He immediately sunk into the warmth that greeted him with a soft smile. A cozy, golden glow was cast over the huge room awaiting him. Two sets of curved staircases led up to the second floor, and the walls were lined with doorways leading to even more rooms. Most impressive of it all was a giant, golden chandelier hanging above them, sparkling with intricate details and jewels and flickering flames and candles.

Tommy couldn't help but stare in awe at the beautiful sight. It was *gorgeous*.

Ranboo shut the door behind them and stepped forward to stand beside Tommy, smiling down at him. Then he cupped his hand up to his mouth and shouted loudly.

"Tubbo! I'm home! Come here!" He looked at Tommy and giggled, "I've got a surprise!"

The house was silent, until a loud squeal echoed through the main room, bouncing off the walls. Tommy jumped in surprise, but Ranboo was unphased, his smile growing even wider. The tiny clip clop of hooves rang through the corridors and soon a tiny pink shape appeared at the top of the stairs, leaning over the railing.

A piglin child stood at the top of the staircase, tusks sticking out of his mouth as he squealed again delightedly when his eye landed on Ranboo. He wore a denim set of overalls and a black and yellow striped sweater. There was a tiny golden clip that held his fur back out of his eyes, as well as a familiar bracelet fastened around his wrist.

Tommy gaped at the piglin child as they raced down the stairs, holding their arms out in front of them. They ran straight for Ranboo, who squatted down and opened his arms expectantly. The child barreled into him and Ranboo scooped the boy into the air, both of them laughing delightedly. Ranboo spun the kid around before turning back around to face Tommy, hugging the boy tightly.

Tommy laughed softly, eyes squinting in a smile.

"Who's this?" He asked, quietly stepping forward. The piglin child blinked at him in confusion, before suddenly realization flickered in his single blue eye. He smiled brightly and began wriggling in Ranboo's arms, reaching out for Tommy.

"Unca Mommy!" The child exclaimed. His English was just a bit wonky, and it was clear he was still trying to grasp the language, probably used to piglin more than the English many others spoke.

Tommy looked at Ranboo for permission, who laughed and smiled, holding the kid out and depositing him in Tommy's arms. The kid studied Tommy's face happily before leaning behind him, starting to mess with Tommy's feathers in amazement as the man chuckled.

"We've been trying to get him to call you 'Uncle Tommy', but the kid insists you are, actually, 'Unca Mommy'" Ranboo chuckled, shaking his head. Tommy blinked at the words.

“Uncle-....” He was quiet for a moment, before gasping loudly. Ranboo barked sharply with laughter.

“Tommy, this is michael, Tubbo and I’s kid,” he grinned.

Tommy felt tears spring to his eyes, shaking his head in disbelief.

“You-You two have a *kid*” he breathed. Ranboo nodded sweetly.

“Found him on his own in the nether about a year ago. He’s still trying to learn English. He’s still mostly speaking Piglin though, maybe even Ender more.”

Tommy smiled, looking back at the child who was grinning happily.

“*You speak ender?*” he asked in the language, watching Ranboo from the corner of his eye.

The hybrid gasped sharply in bewilderment, but Michael grinned ecstatically.

“*I do! Dad help me!*” the boy giggled. Tommy nodded, leaning forward to bonk their foreheads together. It was something Techno did sometimes, and he’d learned it was a piglin thing. Michael squealed with delight at the bonk.

“*You speak ender?*” Ranboo asked breathlessly, pointing at Tommy. The man laughed, nodding again.

“*pretty well if I say so myself!*” he grinned.

Ranboo gasped even louder.

“Holy crap!”

Tommy let out a bark of laughter.

“Seriously? You still don’t swear? Just this once? For me?” He pried, grinning mischievously.

Ranboo shook his head firmly, looking at Michael.

“No, especially not in front of my kid, man,” he whined. Tommy rolled his eyes.

“You can’t seriously tell me that Tubbo doesn’t swear in front of him all the time.”

“Fuck!” Michael agreed. Ranboo groaned as Tommy burst into laughter, squeezing the child tighter in a hug.

The world seemed to come to a standstill as another voice joined theirs.

“Boo?” came a voice from the top of the stairs. Tommy stiffened, every part of him freezing. His heart may as well have just *stopped*. Ranboo looked up the staircase while Tommy still didn’t turn, holding his breath.

The black and white hybrid smiled comfortingly at Tommy and reached forward, gently taking Michael back and offering a comforting smile to him. He looked into Tommy’s eyes. He was desperately pleading with Ranboo for something, what that was they were both unsure, but Ranboo knew well enough.

“Go on,” he whispered, cocking his head to the stairs where the voice had come from.

Tommy nodded quietly.

Everything was deafeningly quiet as Tommy turned toward the stairs. It was almost possible to hear the snow lightly falling outside as they all stayed silent.

Tommy took a deep breath and tilted his head up. All the preparation, all the hours and years he’d spent thinking about what he would do if he saw *him* again were worthless, leaving his mind fuzzy and numb as his eyes locked with the figure’s.

His shaggy brown hair that usually hung in front of his eyes, always getting in the way, leaving him complaining almost constantly, was now held back with a green headband, patterned with little yellow bees. A snug, pine green turtleneck sweater was draped cozily over him. He was still about the same height. His floppy ears were just a little longer, and his horns were bigger, now curling upward. His scars were still there, but healthy, a light pink dusted across his face. Two auburn brown eyes watched him closely, wide and curious.

Just beside his heart hung a silver compass, sparkling with a lavender and magenta shine that rippled across its shiny surface in a way that glowed with magic.

Tears instantly filled Tommy’s eyes.

Tubbo stared down at him from the top of the stairs, waiting just on the top step. He stared deeply at Tommy, seemingly lost in thought. His eyes questioned his wings, his clothes, but most of all his face. Their gazes were locked firmly together, and Tommy could see the way recognition sparked behind his eyes, but the man quickly pushed it back, eyes darkening.

Tubbo glanced over at Ranboo, clearing his throat.

“Who’s this?” He asked quietly. Tommy turned to look at Ranboo over his shoulder, pursing his lips together. The hybrid nodded encouragingly, waving his hand for Tommy to continue forward.

Tommy took a shaky breath and turned back, looking up at Tubbo.

So much he wanted to say. So many worries filled his heart. He wanted to spill his heart out to Tubbo, to collapse right here and sob and beg for forgiveness. What if Tubbo really didn’t want him back? What if coming back was a mistake? What if they were happier without him? What if he had never wanted to see him again-

The compass hanging on Tubbo’s neck sparkled against the golden light of the glowing chandelier. Tommy swayed on his feet just a bit, and he could see how the red arrow flickered just a pit, pointing steadily toward him. The compass Ghostbur had made for Tubbo, and had given Tommy a matching one, because they were best friends. Because they were each other’s favorite thing in the whole wide world. The compass that Tubbo could’ve easily done away with, but instead he now had it hanging beside his heart.

Tommy smiled, and the thoughts all dissipated silently, like ghosts returned to their afterlife.

“The compass,” Tommy began quietly. It was what his heart was locked on, aching fondly and glowing so brightly it could’ve rivaled every star in the sky, every sun or moon or fire.

Tubbo blinked. He slowly reached up to grip the compass, covering it protectively with his hand without looking at it, as his eyes were still locked on the stranger’s standing in his home. But something deep inside of Tubbo whispered that he wasn’t a stranger. He looked so achingly familiar, the thought twisting his heart painfully. Who was he? Why did Tubbo *know* him?

“You’ve kept it all these years,” Tommy continued. He stepped forward quietly, sadly smiling up at Tubbo.

Tubbo blinked, pursing his lips together as his brows knitted together with conflict. His heart screamed.

“I don’t know where mine went but-but it’s alright,” Tommy laughed quietly, pushing his hair out of his face and shuffling his wings. He closed his eyes for a moment, breathing in the silence, before he opened them again. Tubbo was staring at him with a wild, sad expression, like he didn’t want to believe the words his thoughts were yelling at him.

Tommy smiled warmly.

“I always knew I’d find my way back to you no matter what.”

They stayed staring at each other for a few moments more, lost in the other’s eyes, before finally Tubbo broke away, a shaky breath escaping his lips.

Hesitantly he lifted the compass still locked in his grasp and uncovered it with his hands. He stared intently at it, breath hitching, before his whole body seemed to seize, the man hunching over with pained gasp. His heart squeezed.

The compass. It had moved.

For years and years it had pointed to the same spot, broken. He tried following it, but it always led to the same place. A dark, swirling whirlpool, inescapable and lonely and reeking of loss and death. He had kept it close to him ever since that day he learned he’d never see his friend again, but it quickly began to hurt to look at. He still kept it close to his heart, but he never liked looking at it anymore. He didn’t want that reminder of where his best friend had ended up, all because of him.

But now it had changed. The arrow flickered, steadily pointing ahead to the man waiting at the bottom of the stairs, glowing brighter than he’d ever seen it before.

Tubbo choked on a sob catching in his throat, and he pressed a hand over his mouth as tears began to fill his eyes.

“Surely not....” He whispered, “s-surely not.”

The stranger—The person—His friend smiled.

“I’m here, Tubbo,” he murmured softly.

He opened his arms and wings, and Tubbo found he could no longer stand there. He couldn’t be away from him another second ever again. His heart tugged him roughly forward.

Tubbo sobbed and ran down the stairs, barreling into Tommy’s waiting embrace.

I See The Player You Mean

Chapter Summary

Tw - mentioned character death, implied past abuse

The end begins...

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

It was a sunny day, as perfect as all days here were. Fluffy clouds lined the sky, just enough to provide shade when the sun got too hot and to still let its golden rays spread across the windswept grass of the fields. Butterflies and dragonflies and little tufts of dandelion filled the air, and bird song sang out in a chorus that carried across the land like a symphony that would never finish. Even when the night would come later on, the birds would pause, they would never stop, and when the sun rose again they would continue happily.

Several people walked through the field, running around each other with boisterous laughter and kicking through dandelions, pointing out clouds that mirrored shapes and chatting happily as they strolled through the grass joyously.

There was a half-creeper man with green hair and a gas mask, walking beside a man with a red face cover that only let his bright eyes show through, as well as a few white curls poking out beneath the fabric.

There were three men, each wearing matching rings upon their fingers. They clung to each other so they'd never be split apart again. One, in between the other two, had a beanie thrown over his shaggy black hair, the other with pointed horns and a white bandana, and the last with fluffy brown hair and a multicolored sweater, a book clutched tightly to his chest. Next to the demon hybrid strolled a man with a red and white spotted cape and white and black glasses. Trailing happily behind the one with the beanie was a man with green tinged skin and glasses and a relentless happy smile, walking with them with a bounce to his step.

There was a man who resembled a golden shark walking beside a pitch black demon, a woman with fluffy white hair, and a man with diamond painted skin. There was a woman covered in roses with a cape that resembled dragonfly wings on her shoulders. There was a man with a blue mask and a sun-spotted red nose with deer antlers and a warm, quiet smile. A man with dirty blonde hair and a golden chain walked beside his brother, who looked like him but with a purple hoodie.

There was a goddess floating over them with silk green clothing and messy blonde hair. She used to wear a white porcelain mask but had let go of it a few years ago.

A man with fox-like features walked hand in hand with a smaller fox with shiny white fur and a youthful laugh and grin.

A girl with tulip pink hair held a picnic basket in her hands, beside her a man with red and blue glasses, and a king with a golden crown that had been broken once, but soon delicately put back together. A siamese cat hybrid walked beside two men, one of which wore a blue, hedgehog onesie. Another demon hybrid stood beside a man with a frog hat, a girl with white cat ears and bells sticking out of her long hair, and a man with a tape recorder strapped at his belt. Another fox chatted happily with a person with a cane and a bunny eared hood.

At the front of the group were six people.

One was a father with an aged smile and shaggy blonde hair. Black wings that sparkled against the sunlight sat proudly upon his back.

Two of them were brothers, one carrying a guitar, and one with long pink hair and a tusked smile.

Two of them were a married couple, both scarred but still wearing smiles that never seemed to fade anymore. A piglin child held the goat hybrid's hands, pointing out the butterflies and flowers they passed with wonder.

And between all of them was a man with long blonde hair and electric blue eyes. Stormy gray wings were draped over the two friends at his side as they playfully shoved each other and passed around snarky quips and toothy smiles. Tommy was smiling brighter than any of them had ever seen, surrounded completely by his family.

A dragon pup trotted along with him, weaving through people's legs, wildly, coming very close to almost tripping them before skidding away with a playful bark.

In the distance, a goddess watched. She looked upon the group happily as they reached a tall hill, overlooking a country they'd spent so long protecting. They laid out dozens of blankets and began to open the several baskets they'd all brought, passing food around to each other as they exchanged stories and laughter.

The goddess smiled where she stood, happily gazing with a proud smile over her work. She had made sure this perfect day would not be interrupted. She'd flicked away clouds that were two dark, threatening rain, and made sure the sun was a bright glare in the sky. She didn't need to worry about a figure in green and a white porcelain mask. She'd gotten rid of him ages ago. In this world, he no longer existed, and for her boy, she would keep it that way.

She knew if the people standing below her had seen her they'd invite her to sit with them at their picnic, and while she would love to, instead she sat just out of sight. If any of them were to look up the hill where she stood, none would see her. She'd made sure the strings that made up this reality were tightly cloaked around her, making her invisible to them all. But mostly to Tommy. It filled her with a twinge of guilt, but it was for the best.

As Kristin stood, happily watching the group, she felt the wind at her side shift, and the strings of reality warped every so slightly as a second figure came to stand beside her on the grassy hill. She pursed her lips with a sigh.

“Kristin,” the new god greeted in a silk, melancholy voice, stepping into place beside her. He tilted his head curiously at the goddess, awaiting her acknowledgment.

“XD,” Kristin returned calmly, glancing at him coolly, “To what do I owe the pleasure?”

The god shifted the four white wings upon his back.

“You know why I am here, Kristin. We are not supposed to mess with their worlds, and you are aware of this, no?” he chided coldly, a restrained sneer in his voice. Kristin inhaled deeply, turning back to face the people she watched over. The god followed her gaze, tilting his head again.

“I am aware. It is only this once, XD,” she responded softly. XD hummed, standing up a bit straighter.

“Who’s world is this?”

“This is the world of a boy named Tommy. I’m certain you’ve heard of him.”

XD nodded slowly.

“I have heard stories. But he’s only a mere mortal, is he not? What makes this boy so special to you that you would go and change the rules in this way?” He questioned with a smooth, almost mocking tone.

“The other world was unkind to him, and the one that awaited him was far worse. It was dark and lonely, I couldn’t bear to leave him there for the eternity that had been set for him,” Kristin said flatly, turning her head to look back at XD. He returned her glare, humming again.

“You worked hard on it,” he held his hand out slowly, seemingly to grab something out of the air. Like pulling at a thread, his claws snagged onto a blue string, and as he pulled at it, a part of the world began to unravel. Kristin hissed through her teeth and stepped forward, lightly shooing him away before going about, fixing the strings of the reality. “I almost thought it was real,” Xd continued.

“I have worked hard on it,” Kristin muttered coldly. She stood up as the world returned to normal, glancing over at the people. Luckily the only one of them that would’ve noticed the world coming undone hadn’t, as Tommy was still laughing and chatting happily with the hazy figures beside him. She sighed with relief. “So don’t ruin it. I intended for this world to be perfect to him and it shall stay this way.”

“Perfect?” Xd laughed, his wings fluttering, “If this world is perfect,” he tilted his head back, looking up at the sky, “Then why does it reek of death? Who did you kill in this ‘perfect’ world?”

Kristin huffed, then took a deep breath to calm herself. She turned to the god with a calm, yet dark glare.

“I never said this world was perfect, XD, I said it was perfect to him,” she gestured to the blonde boy sitting surrounded by his friends. He was the only one of them who’s forms didn’t flicker. He was solid and there and real. He almost seemed alive, laughing and smiling with a grin so bright it could rival the sun. “It needed to be as real as possible, but nothing is real without loss. Sacrifices were required to ensure his happiness.”

She glanced at the sky, following XD’s gaze to a faint star hanging suspended there.

“But I could not bear to take something from him that was real. So I made her, for him.”

“So,” XD hummed, “This boy. Is he aware of what you’ve done for him?”

Kristin was quiet when she answered, taking in a deep breath.

“For his sake, I hope he never finds out.”

They stood in silence for a few moments more, watching the boy. He leaned forward to hug the goat horned boy beside him. Luckily, the mirage held strong, and the flickering figure of the boy held strong as he collapsed in the foggy Tubbo’s arms.

“Tommy...what happened to him?” Xd asked calmly.

Kristin stood silently, her lips pressed into a thin, sad line. Her gaze didn’t waver, still fixed tightly upon Tommy. If all went well, he’d never know. He’d never know how the world above had been forced to continue without him. Because for him, it had been seven years. But for the others, the others that had to live on without him by their side...It had been mere weeks. And it would be more, more filled with a loss they’d never grow past. In the world above, there would be no reunion between him and the friends that had missed him so dearly. To them he was gone, lost forever to the swirling darkness that waited beyond life. They would never see his star cloaked wings and older eyes or hear his boisterous laugh, and only he would ever know they had existed. Eventually the others would find happiness, but there would always be that part of their lives missing. The part of their lives named Tommy.

Kristin closed her eyes silently.

“...He drowned.”

Chapter End Notes

And the beginning ends.

Thank you all for being here with me as I wrote this story. Thank you for never giving up on it and all your support on every chapter. This is the first full fanfic I’ve ever finished, and I am insanely proud of it.

If you'd like to come talk to be about it on twitter or instagram, find me at
@littledoodler12

Your support has been astounding and reading your comments always makes me a
giddy, giggling mess.

Genuinely, thank you.

In the words of the final end poem, “ The game was over and the player woke up from
the dream. And the player began a new dream. And the player dreamed again, dreamed
better.”

On to the next story!

End Notes

Fanart, kudos, and comments appreciated!

Insta and Twitter- littledoodler12

Works inspired by this one

[I Know That You Will be There](#) by [l1ght](#)

[Bad poetry inspired by great Dream smp fics](#) by [Fallenstarter](#)

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